'Anti-Erap' senators doing good job, says poll

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2001 ★ 86 PAGES 7 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 38 ₱15

Prosecution keen on 'mother account'

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

THE SENATE impeachment trial shifts its focus this week to a second sealed envelope that, according to the prosecution, contains Equitable PCI Bank documents pertaining to an alleged P1.2-billion "mother account" of President Estrada.

The 11-member House prosecution panel,

PROSECUTION/ A21

After Laarni, Joy

ANOTHER mistress of President Estrada, Joy Melendrez, flew to Los Angeles, California, Saturday night, airport sources said yesterday. She left with Jose Mari Ejercito, her son by the President, and a woman named Catalina Melendrez. She is the second mistress of Mr. Estrada, after Laarni Enriquez, known to have left the country in the course of the impeachment trial. She left on Philippine Airlines Flight PR102 around 10 p.m., the sources said, adding that Melendrez had made a prior flight booking. She and her companions flew first class. *TJ Burgonio*

Sin: Keep up good fight

Opposition groups map out moves to oust 'criminal' President

EDWIN BACASMAS

CLOWNING GLORY

Members of Anakbayan show up as clowns and taunt several senator-judges whom the militant group perceives as biased for President Estrada at the Fiesta Carnival in Cubao, Quezon City.

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA, VOLT CONTRERAS AND CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

MANILA Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin yesterday called on the "people to keep up the good fight" to force impeached President Estrada to step down.

Buoyed by Sin's call, the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil) II declared: "We overthrew a ruthless dictator. We will oust a criminal President."

Kompil II issued the statement yesterday at its National All Leaders Convention at the Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City on how to oust the President in a non-violent manner should the Senate vote to acquit despite the overwhelming evidence against him.

In a pastoral letter read in Catholic Churches in Metro Manila, Sin asked Filipinos to join peaceful and "non-violent" mass actions "to express our indignation" over the President's refusal to step down.

Sin said the President's continued stay in office despite the loss of moral ascendancy to govern had resulted in the further deterioration of the country's political and economic situation.

Sin said the Church expressing its indignation and protests was not only a constitutional right but also "a Christian duty to stand up for what is right and moral using only and always peaceful and orderly means."

The Church nevertheless respects the constitutional process of the impeachment trial and "by now the nation is progressively getting an insight into the truth," Sin said.

"We appeal strongly to our respected senator-judges in the impeachment court," he said. "We ask you to vote according to a rightly formed conscience and administer impartial justice."

Kompil II said it was preparing for massive protest actions "in light of increasingly obvious indications of bias (in favor Mr. Estrada's acquittal) by a number of senators."

The group said Mr. Estrada was already guilty as charged and "no amount of deodorizing by his spin doctors will convince us otherwise."

The President is accused of bribery, graft and corrupt practices, betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution.

SIN/ A20

Recession to follow acquittal, say traders

BY JUN MALIG
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—A verdict of acquittal for President Estrada would mean an economic recession and more capital flight, according to an influential business group based in Makati City.

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club (MBC), predicted more troubles for the economy if the Senate impeachment court were to acquit the President, noting that capitalists have been transferring their investments to other countries.

"This is manifested by the drop in the stock market by 30 percent and growing unemployment rate," Luz told the Second Philippine Forum on Saturday at the Holiday Inn Resort here.

In Manila, acting Press Secretary Michael Toledo said Malacañang was putting up measures to ensure that the economy is "insulated" from a possible "heated" political scenario after a verdict is made known by the impeachment court next month.

Whatever the outcome, Toledo said in a telephone interview, measures were already in place to ensure that the economy would not collapse or government activities paralyzed.

He did not disclose what the measures were.

RECESSION/ A5

Equitable PCI Bank for sale

Go family, SSS, GSIS agree to sell shares, say sources

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE GO family and two state pension funds are planning to sell their combined stake in Equitable PCI Bank after it got embroiled in President Estrada's impeachment trial and suffered heavy withdrawals.

Industry sources yesterday said the Go family, the Social Security System, and the Government Service Insurance System agreed to sell their shares in a special board meeting last week.

The sources said the three major stockholders were considering as possible buyers Bank of Philippine Islands of the Ayala group, Metrobank of tycoon George Ty and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. of the Yuchengco family.

"We have to find the shortest turnaround time as to how the bank can be strengthened," a top Equitable PCI Bank official told the INQUIRER.

George L. Go, whose family owns about 30 percent of Equitable PCI Bank, last month resigned as board chair amid allegations that President Estrada maintained secret accounts to hide ill-gotten wealth in the bank.

Go also resigned as treasurer of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation following reports that it accepted P200 million in "jueteng" payoffs to the President.

Negative publicity about Equitable PCI Bank and Go's reported close links to the President have led to heavy withdrawals.

Banking sources said depositors had pulled out more than P30 billion from the bank, significantly eroding its deposit base of P160 billion.

"If withdrawals go on like this, selling the bank will be better for everybody," a source said.

But Go and other bank officials were quick to dispel such market rumors, saying only P3.2 billion had been withdrawn.

Even so, sources said the SSS and the GSIS refused to take any chances and decided to sell as well.

The SSS, which owns 23 percent of the bank, and the GSIS, which holds 12 percent, injected about P7.5 billion each to help the then medium-sized Equitable Bank acquire PCI Bank in 1999 in one of the country's celebrated bank mergers.

The infusion entitled the two pension funds to two board seats in Equitable PCI Bank, which emerged as the country's third largest with more than P255 billion in assets.

EQUITABLE/ A21

Prosecutors seeing 'double' in wealth hunt

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

PROSECUTORS are seeing "double" in their search for the hidden bank accounts and unexplained wealth of President Estrada.

They have uncovered two Garciases and two Joses allegedly holding the bank accounts of the President.

Private Prosecutor Simeon Marcelo said Jose Marcelo, Jose Velarde, Kelvin Garcia and Kevin Garcia were among the assumed names that the President had used in hiding his wealth.

The private prosecutor explained that although he was a Marcelo, he was not related to the President.

PROSECUTORS/ A5

'FILIPINO OF THE YEAR'

Dodong Jun makes father proud

BY JHUNNEX NAPALLACAN
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—It was a happy coincidence for a father to discover on no less than his 96th birthday that his son and namesake was being applauded as the INQUIRER's "Filipino of the Year 2000."

"It's God's grace and blessing," a proud Hilario Davide Sr., his voice quavering, told the INQUIRER yesterday in a telephone interview.

The old man was teary-eyed upon seeing the picture of his son—"Dodong Jun" to his family, and Chief Justice and Presiding Officer Hilario Davide Jr. to most Filipinos—on the front page of the INQUIRER yesterday, his daughter-in-law Crisencia Davide said.

Dodong is a Cebuano term of endearment similar to "Totoy" in Tagalog, "Toto" in Ilonggo and "Sonny" in English.

"It was a birthday gift for Papa who turned 96 today. It is the greatest gift—the accomplishment of a father—to have a son who is considered the Filipino of the Year," said Crisencia, whose husband Jose is Hilario Jr.'s eldest brother.

Every weekday, shortly before the start of the impeachment trial at 2 p.m., Hilario Sr. positions himself in front of the television, she said.

He watches the impeachment proceedings intently and, even if he sometimes can hardly hear what is going on, he is satisfied just seeing his Dodong Jun on the screen.

Hilario Sr. does not even eat his dinner until the trial is adjourned for the day, Crisencia said.

DODONG/ A20

CHIEF Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and his father Hilario Sr.

Estrada losing battle over public opinion

BY AMANDO DORONILA

ANALYSIS

THE REMAINING days of President Estrada's impeachment trial will be fought in the arena of public opinion, and the almost daily pummeling of the President in the trial since it resumed two weeks ago has taken a heavy toll on his trust rating.

It is still premature to say that a public opinion avalanche finding Mr. Estrada guilty is shaping up, but what is clear is that during the past four months, he has been steadily losing the battle over public opinion.

It would be disastrous for the senator-judges to ignore the erosion of the President's popularity/trust ratings.

A "daily tracking poll" of 300 respondents conducted on Jan. 8 by Pulse Asia in Metro Manila showed that Mr. Estrada's trust rating tumbled to minus 19 percent, from 4 percent at the start of the trial on Dec. 7. This finding prompted the normally cautious University of the Philippines professor Felipe Miranda, head of Pulse Asia, to remark that "the direction of the survey trend shows that since the trial started, the President has suffered a big loss in (trust) capital."

Miranda will hold a briefing on the details of the survey on Wednesday, and sources in Pulse Asia said the President's trust rating had contin-

ESTRADA/ A20

Second FRONT PAGE

ANTI-SMUGGLING DRIVE

Palace asked: What happened to probe?

AN OPPOSITION congressman has asked Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara to "dig up" the records of Malacañang and come up with a status report on the much vaunted anti-smuggling drive that President Estrada had announced with much fanfare in August 1999.

"What were the results? Who were apprehended? Was the syndicates' machinery smashed as promised?" Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri asked Angara.

The Bukidnon congressman's request came on the heels of the testimony of former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu in Mr. Estrada's impeachment trial last week.

Espiritu testified that he had seen "known smugglers" mingling around the President in Malacañang social functions despite Palace orders to go after them.

But when prodded by some senator-judges to cite the names of the smugglers he saw, Espiritu balked, saying he feared for his life. The prosecution acknowledged that the danger to Espiritu if he revealed the names was indeed real.

Zubiri cited an Aug. 21, 1999 official Malacañang press release, which listed the names of suspected smugglers being investigated by then Customs Commissioner Nelson Tan.

In the Malacañang press release, Tan mentioned the following names: Lucio Co, Johnny Sy, Robert Uy, Ruel Tolentino, Blandino Tolentino, Jun Manimtim, Zeny Dayanghirang, Jovy Castillo, Jojo Agana, Edwin Santos, Lina Flores, Jenny Chua, Lucio Ko and a certain "Bombit."

Zubiri said the results of the Tan investigation were never publicized.

"Neither was there an announcement clearing these people," he said.

"It is also but fair to the persons named by Tan to have their names cleared now, even belatedly, in the light of Espiritu's statement before the Senate," Zubiri said in a statement.

He said a statement from Angara on the matter was very important "because the public perception is that Malacañang didn't lift a finger against smugglers, a cabal so powerful that even a wealthy former Cabinet official was afraid of mentioning their names."

Zubiri said that unless Espiritu's concerns are addressed, "the suspicion that ours is a republic run by smugglers would linger on."

In Lucena city, Eduardo Rodriquez, a former governor of Quezon province and co-convenor of the Erap Resign Movement (ERM)-Quezon chapter, said Espiritu's hasty departure for abroad was an indication of just how "serious and strong" the influence of the smuggling syndicate was in the Estrada administration.

"That could be one of the primary reasons why the President could not just resign from his post. The syndicate is lording it over in this Erap administration, and the smugglers could not possibly let him go just like that because their interest is at stake," Rodriquez said during the formal launching of ERM-Quezon.

"Why would Espiritu display hesitance to disclose the name of the smugglers when he had already implicated the most powerful person in the country today?" the former governor asked. *With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr. PDI, Southern Luzon Bureau*

Probe PNB behest loan to BW, Angara urged

Narvasa also asked: Quit Erap defense team

EXECUTIVE Secretary Edgardo Angara should order a probe into the P600-million behest loan that the Philippine National Bank gave to BW Resources to prove Malacañang's claim that it is now pursuing a reform agenda, Rep. Ralph Recto said yesterday.

The PNB behest loan to BW Resources is "the test case that will prove the President's resolve to prohibit the precipitate granting of unsecured loans by government-controlled financial institutions to big business," the Batangas representative said in a statement.

Recto also urged former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, who was chair of the PNB board when the loan was made, to withdraw as the head of Mr. Estrada's defense team.

President Estrada had threatened last week to name prominent businessmen who allegedly used their political connections in the previous Ramos administration to avail of loans, favors and concessions from state-controlled financial institutions.

But Recto said the Estrada government's reluctance to probe a transaction "which has all the earmarks of a behest loan now handcuffs him (Mr. Estrada) from further making such a disclosure."

Before Mr. Estrada can assure others of receiving undue favors from previous administrations, "he must first prove that his administration is not guilty of the same charge," Recto said.

The congressman said that the lack of public outrage over Narvasa's participation in the grant of the BW Resources loan "should be correctly interpreted as the public's way of giving him the time to withdraw as counsel of the President."

It is a courtesy extended by the public to a man who has served his country well, Recto said.

"Narvasa should reciprocate this display of good faith by unilaterally removing himself from the defense panel. Such move is a class act expected from decent men like Narvasa."

'Anti-Erap' solons doing 'good job'

EXACTLY half of respondents believe President Estrada is guilty of the charges against him at his Senate impeachment trial, a new telephone survey showed.

The result reflected a drop of six percentage points, from 56 percent to 50 percent, in the number of persons who had believed the President is guilty in a survey conducted the previous week.

But the survey also showed that senators generally perceived to vote for conviction of Mr. Estrada in the impeachment trial continue to get high marks for "doing a good job."

The surveys, conducted by Audits and Surveys Worldwide (ASW) every Saturday since the week before the President's impeachment trial began, showed the number of persons who think Mr. Estrada is guilty is declining.

The first survey on Dec. 3, 2000 showed that 55 percent of respondents thought the President is guilty. This rose to a high of 58 percent in the Dec. 24 survey before sliding to 56 and now 50 percent of respondents.

Conversely, the number of people who think the President is not guilty and those who are undecided rose by three percentage points each over the previous survey.

In the latest poll, 27 percent of respondents think Mr. Estrada is not guilty, while 23 percent can't say one way or the other.

As for the President's defense panel, 82 percent of those surveyed said it was doing a good job, up from the 78 percent who had thought so in the previous poll.

Since the surveys began, the defense panel's rating has hovered around the high 70s and low 80s percentile of approval.

By contrast, the prosecution team registered a 68 percent approval rating, holding steady in the high 60s percentile the last three survey periods.

This was up from the initial 57 percent approval rating at the start of the trial when it was obvious that members of the panel were rusty in their courtroom work.

Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., presiding officer of the trial court, maintained his 88 percent approval rating, down only one point from his rating in the previous poll.

This was up over 30 points from his initial rating of 57 percent just before the start of the trial.

The senators who are sitting as judges at the historic trial of the President did not fare too well, however.

Of the 21 senators physically present at the trial, 13 of them suffered a decline in their approval ratings over the previous survey.

The biggest drop, 20 percentage points from 85 percent to 65 percent, was suffered by Sen. Renato Cayetano who, it was revealed at the trial, had profited from the sale of BW Resources shares at the time the stock was allegedly being manipulated.

President Estrada's handling of the BW resources investigation makes up one of the charges in the four Articles of Impeachment against him.

Sen. Loren Legarda led the list of senators with the highest approval rating of 80 percent. This was down, however, from her previous high of 86 percent.

The senators who registered the highest increase in their approval ratings were Sens. Vicente Sotto III, Ramon Revilla and Robert Jaworski, with eight-, six- and seven-point increases in their ratings, respectively.

ASW is an international marketing, media and public opinion research firm based in New York. Founded in 1953, it opened its Asia Pacific headquarters in the Philippines in 1997.

Respondents are at least 18 years old and are not househelp. ASW claims a sampling error of three percent at 95 percent confidence level. *Bill Formoso*

Do you think the senators are doing a good job or not in this on-going impeachment trial against President Estrada as of January 14 (%)

1. Legarda	80
2. Pimentel	76
3. Roco	74
4. Drilon	71
5. Biazon	70
6. Flavier	66
7. Cayetano	65
8. Guingona	63
9. Osmena Jr.	63
10. Sotto III	60
11. Santiago	59
12. Magsaysay Jr.	59
13. Enrile	58
14. Tatad	58
15. Osmena	58
16. Coseteng	55
17. Honasan	53
18. Revilla	51
19. Ople	49
20. Aquino-Oreta	48
21. Jaworski	46
22. Barbers	26

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Singapore	195	270	Saipan	346	526	Toronto	460	850
Taipei	215	310	Guam	322	479	Sydney	485	615
Osaka	235	337	Honolulu	435	645	Melbourne	485	615
K. Lumpur	215	390	Los Angeles	375	680	Europe	391	762

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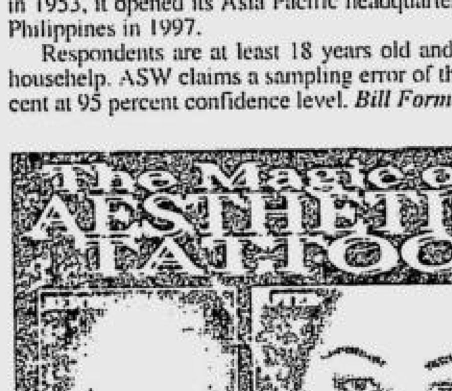

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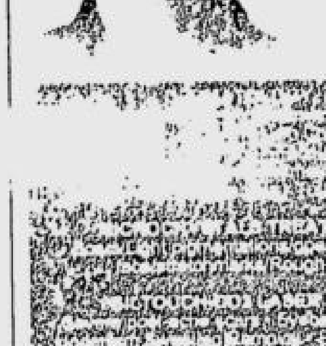

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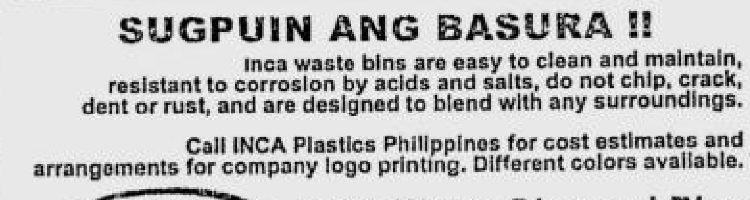

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Talks start for kidnapped girl

GOVERNMENT troops yesterday temporarily called off offensives in Basilan to begin talks for the release of a 6-year-old girl who was kidnapped last week by an extremist group.

Army commander Maj. Daniel Lucero said April Adzam Grant has been turned over by her Abu Sayyaf captors to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the remote village of Pintasan on Basilan.

Lucero said emissaries have established contact with the guerrillas.

April was snatched at gunpoint last Wednesday from her home in Lamitan, Basilan.

Lucero said Pintasan has been cordoned off to prevent the kidnappers from escaping.

"We will do our best to recover the girl unharmed and without paying ransom," Lucero told reporters.

April's mother, Mina Rasul Grant, yesterday warned her husband, Briton Douglas Abduallah Grant, not to return to Basilan because he might also be abducted.

"They know the British have money, I advised him not to do that (return)," Mina said in her heavily guarded home. "We are afraid for our safety here."

Grant is in Scotland working on the immigration papers of his wife, April and their baby girl. April is Mina's daughter from a previous marriage.

April was believed first taken by her Abu Sayyaf captors to nearby Tuburan town, a known rebel lair. It was not clear when she was transferred to the custody of the MILF.

The kidnappers had asked for P100,000 for the release of the girl. Mina said the rebels told her they would kill April if they did not get the money.

Lucero said information gathered by intelligence agents, however, showed that two of Mina's relatives could be involved in the kidnapping, a claim angrily denied by her.

Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin said yesterday April was kidnapped by her own uncle.

Salapuddin said the uncle wanted to get back land that Mina had won in a court case.

Salapuddin said he got the information from Ustadz Muhim Muhajid, chair of the Basilan Supreme Ulama Council.

"To get even with the girl's mother, the suspect abducted the girl, demanding that the land be given back to him," Salapuddin said.

He quoted Muhajid as saying the suspect had sought the help of the MILF based in Tuburan, where initial negotiations were conducted.

Col. Saulito Aromin, chief of the Army's 103rd Brigade, identified the girl's uncle only as Jubaran.

"Our first assessment was correct," he said, "It was an inside job."

Aromin said, however, authorities were wrong when they said the mother was involved in the abduction.

On Friday, Aromin said neighbors had noticed that Mina did not seem worried and she even went shopping the day after the abduction.

"She is not involved," Aromin said yesterday.

Jubaran, Aromin said, has threatened to turn the girl over to a kidnap-for-ransom group if the P100,000 "board and lodging" fee was not paid.

AFP and Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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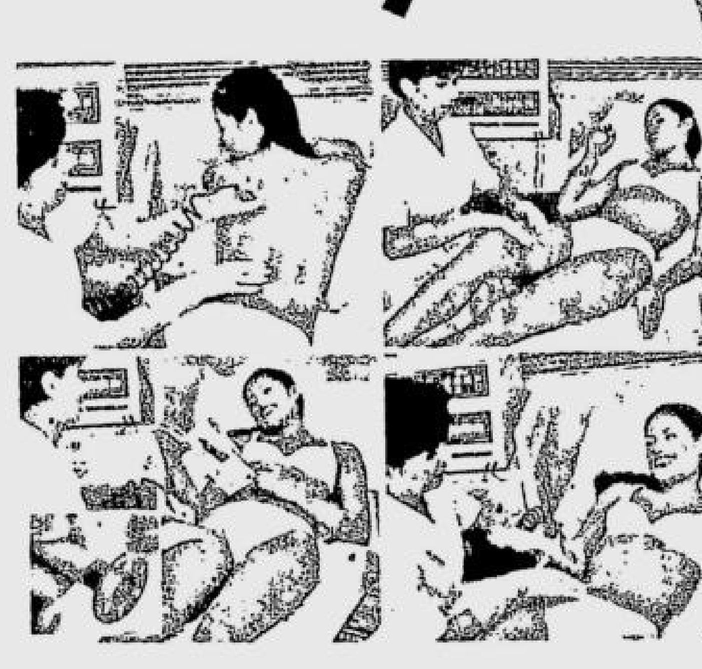

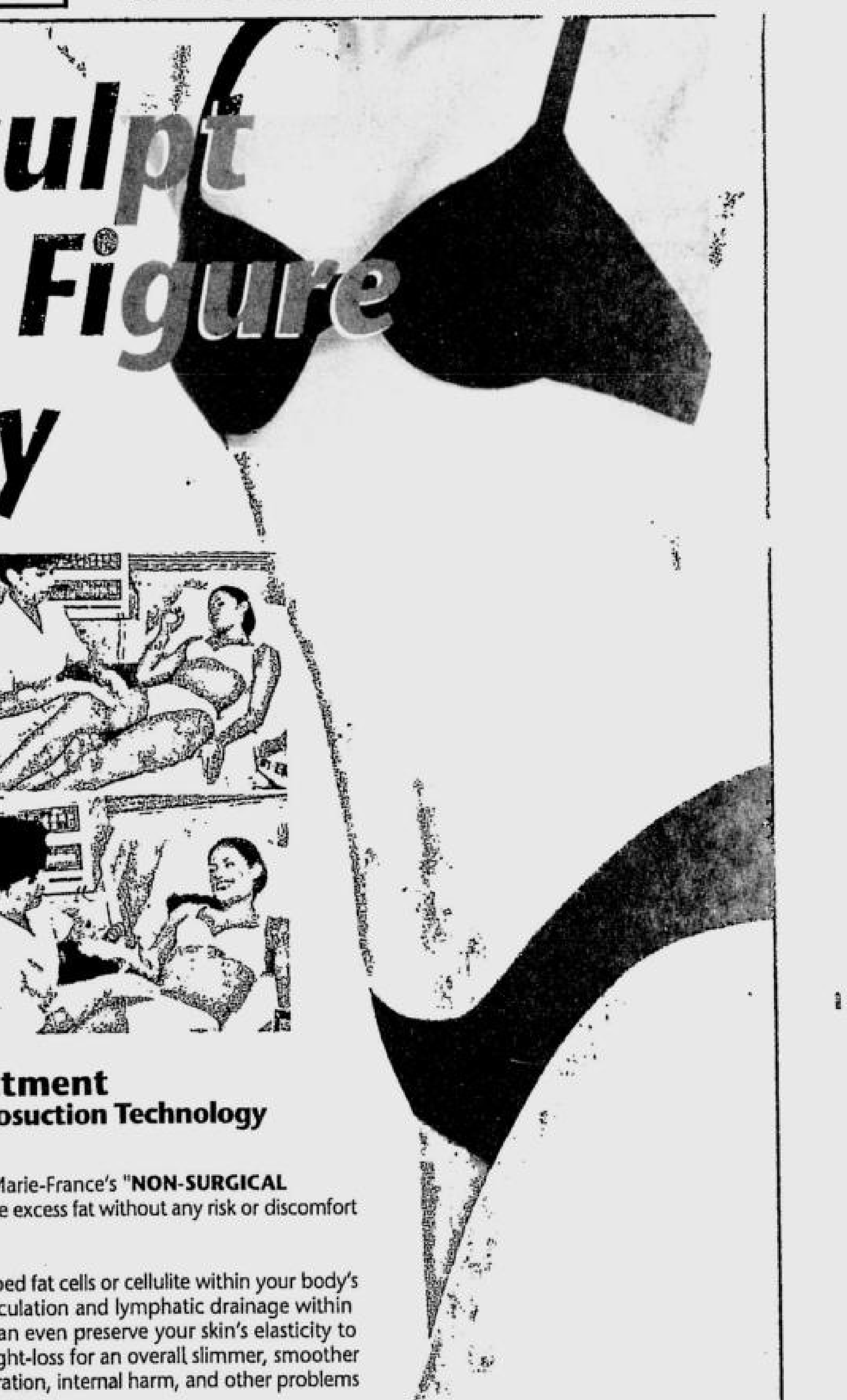

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Close Erap pal arrives from HK

WILLIAM Gatchalian, President Estrada's close friend, returned to Manila late Saturday night from Hong Kong and belied reports that he had fled to avoid being summoned to testify at the President's impeachment trial.

Gatchalian dismissed speculation that he had left the country after his company, Wellex Corp., was cited in the impeachment trial as the recipient of a loan from Mr. Estrada using the name "Jose Velarde."

Gatchalian said he was willing to take the witness stand if called by the impeachment court.

The businessman, known as "the plastics king," returned with his wife, Deehua, on Philippine Airlines at 10:50 p.m.

On the same flight was another man who has been linked to the President, Willy Ocier, chair of Belle Corp. which owns the posh Tagaytay Highlands subdivision in Tagaytay City.

Gatchalian, the presidential adviser on migrant workers, said he went to Hong Kong on business and to look into the problems of Filipino workers there. He said he regularly travels to Hong Kong.

Gatchalian flew to Hong Kong last Thursday, at about the same time Laarni Enriquez, one of the President's mistresses, also left for the former British colony.

Enriquez flew to Hong Kong the morning after court officers had tried to serve her a summons to appear before the Senate impeachment court trying the President on four counts.

Gatchalian denied traveling with Enriquez.

"It's not true that I went to Hong Kong with Laarni. She was on another flight. Mine was PR 300, hers was PR 302," he said.

Enriquez's flight was delayed for about two hours, allegedly to wait for a passenger who was caught attempting to take P6 million in cash out of the country.

The man, Juancho Mendiola, 36, denied any links to Enriquez. Philippine Airlines also denied the man was the reason for the delay. *TJ Burgonio*

RP, US backing biotech project

THE PHILIPPINES and the United States are jointly undertaking a five-year program aimed at enhancing biotech research here, a Malacañang statement said yesterday.

Under the $7-million, five-year program both parties would look into boosting agricultural productivity through field research on biotechnology, the statement said.

"Absolutely, I think the Philippines will be one of the leaders in biotech in the Asian region," the statement quoted John Alexander, an expert in the field from the US Department of Agriculture, as saying.

Environmental activists have been pressing the government into rethinking its agenda of increasing crop production by introducing genetically modified crops after officials allowed the "field testing" of gene-altered corn last year.

Proposed legislation that would ban entry of imported commodities with genetically modified ingredients as well as implementing control mechanisms on their local production have been pending in Congress. *AFP*

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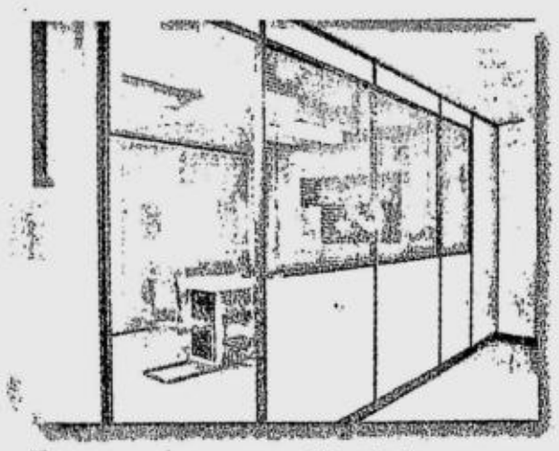
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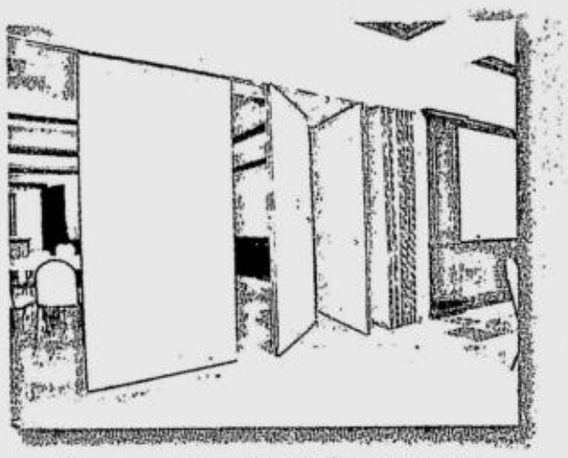
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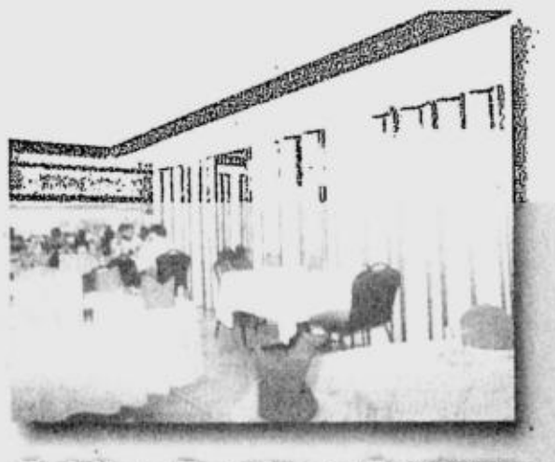
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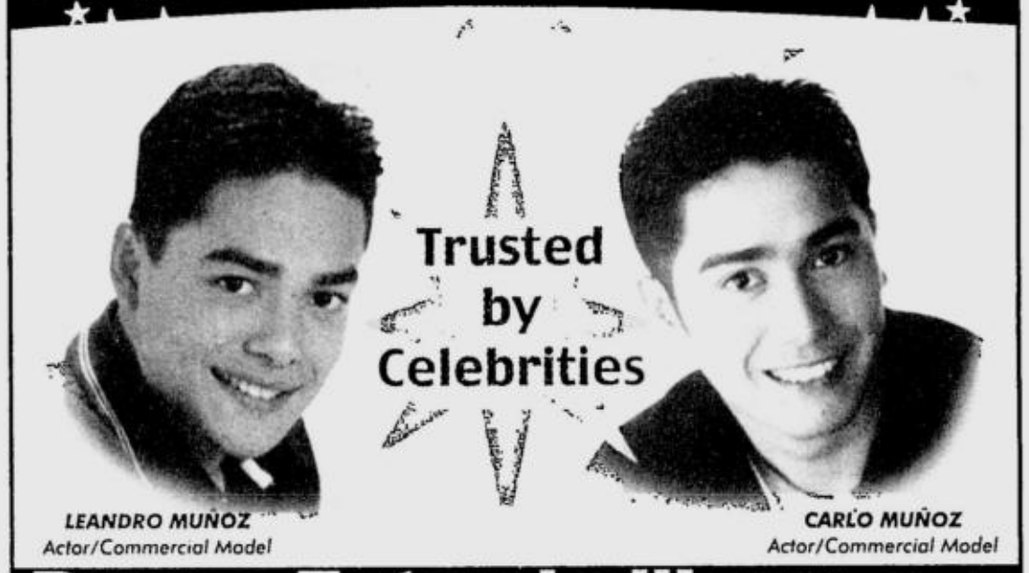

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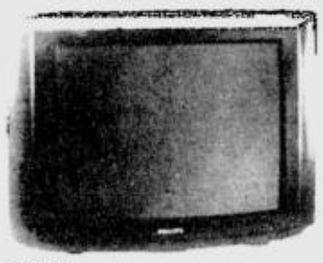
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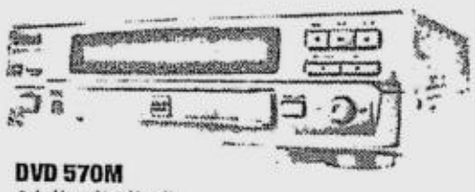
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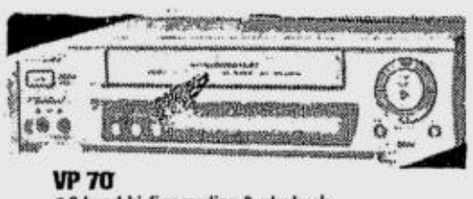
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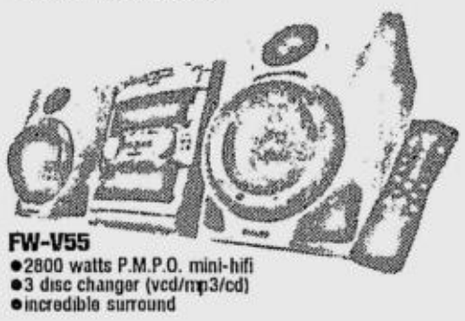
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40"x 48" x 5.7" 2-WAY OPEN
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	POWER PALLETS	LOADMASTER
DYNAMIC LOAD	750 kgs	1000 kgs
STATIC LOAD	2000 kgs	2000 kgs
1-99 PIECES	P 750	P 945
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40"x 48" x 5.7" 4-WAY CLOSED
1 x 1.2x 0.145 Mtr.
FOR 24" MAX. (HAND PALLET TRUCK) FORK WIDTH

	POWER PALLETS	LOADMASTER
DYNAMIC LOAD	750 kgs	1000 kgs
STATIC LOAD	2000 kgs	2000 kgs
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100 PIECES & UP	P 755	P 945

40"x 48" x 7" 2-WAY OPEN
1 x 1.2 x 0.180 Mtr.
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	POWER PALLETS	LOADMASTER
DYNAMIC LOAD	1250 kgs	2000 kgs
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40"x 48" x 7" 4-WAY CLOSED
1 x 1.2 x 0.180 Mtr.
FOR 24" MAX. (HAND PALLET TRUCK) FORK WIDTH

	POWER PALLETS	LOADMASTER
DYNAMIC LOAD	1500 kgs	2000 kgs
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48"x 48" x 7" 4-WAY OPEN
1.2 x 1.2 x 0.180 Mtr.
FOR 24"-27" MAX. (HAND PALLET TRUCK) FORK WIDTH

	POWER PALLETS	LOADMASTER
DYNAMIC LOAD	1250 kgs	2000 kgs
STATIC LOAD	6000 kgs	6000 kgs
1-99 PIECES	P 1415	P 1775
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Recession to follow acquittal, say traders

(From page A1)

"What the government is doing is to insulate the economy from the current political crisis," he said.

Luz said that although the business community did not expect Mr. Estrada to be acquitted by the senator-judges, the country would be in deeper economic and political crises if the court failed to recognize the evidence against the President.

The worst-case scenario would be political instability spawned by frustration of the people, he said. "There would be a volatility in the economy and politics, and a recession."

Luz was among 140 participants from the business, government, non-government, arts, media and academe in the forum, which aims to "define the burdens of leadership in coaxing our people to build a better nation in a globalized and digitized world."

Plunging peso

In Quezon City, Cayetano Paderanga, former chief of the National Economic Development Authority, said the peso value would depreciate to P58 to a US dollar if the impeachment trial ended up in an "indecisive acquittal" of the President.

The peso stood at P51.59 to a dollar last Friday.

Paderanga described an indecisive acquittal as that arrived at through a "process that is not credible" or by just "eight or nine votes," the minimum number needed to offset a two-thirds vote for a conviction.

Twenty-two senators are serving as judges in the impeachment trial.

"The downside risks will be quite high. There will be capital flight similar to what happened in 1984 when even Filipino investors would not stay here," Paderanga said in yesterday's Kompil II National Leaders Convention at the Ateneo de Manila campus.

In a statement, Bohol Rep. Ernesto Herrera expressed a similar gloomy prediction of a P55-$1 exchange rate in case of an acquittal.

"Investors will react negatively to an acquittal. There will be more flight out of the peso in favor of the dollar," said the congressman, a principal author of the impeachment complaint against the President.

Herrera sought to belie forecasts made by Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara that the peso would improve to 46-47 to a dollar once the trial is over and the President is cleared.

Vigilance

Former Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II, principal convenor of the Pampanga forum, said businessmen and the people were closely watching how the senator-judges would decide on the case.

"The report that there would be disorder once the decision of the impeachment court comes out is alarming. But we hope that there would not be any disorder. Whatever the reaction of the business community and the masses to the verdict would depend on the process on how the senator-judges arrive at their judgment," he said.

Luz said the MBC believed that it would be impossible for the impeachment court to acquit Mr. Estrada.

"That would be very difficult to believe because of the many concrete (pieces of) evidence against President Estrada. The senator-judges would base their judgment on evidence and not on political consideration (because that) is their obligation," he said.

Decisive call

Paderanga said a "decisive acquittal" would mean the peso exchange rate lingering at 52.2 per dollar. "Decisive acquittal," he said, involved a process that is deemed credible and a large number of senator-judges voting to acquit Mr. Estrada.

But the situation would similarly worsen if the President fails to convince the people that he had "changed" for the better, he said.

"There will be a three- to six-month waiting period. People will not give him back their full confidence until he had shown that he has really changed," he added.

A conviction would significantly send the peso up, he said, at around 45 per dollar. "The economy will start on a clean slate—from zero rather than from a negative—with a new President."

Washington Sycip, founding chair of SGV, the country's top accounting and auditing firm, blamed the rich for the country's current economic crisis.

Attitudes

He said the economic woes were the results of "attitudes and behaviors of the upper income group." The Philippines, he said, had the greatest income inequality in East Asia due to the failure of the upper class to make good its promise to help close the gap between the rich and the poor.

During the crisis from 1983 to 1986 and the succeeding coup attempts against then President Corazon Aquino, several businessmen made pledges to help close the gap between the rich and the poor.

"We have tended to forget those pledges," he said during the Philippine Forum.

Sycip said that while ordinary employees were paying their taxes properly, their employers were not, thus widening the income gap.

He said a Filipino doctor in Philadelphia was shocked to learn how little incomes his former classmates declared when, in fact, they are living in luxurious houses and taking frequent vacations abroad.

He said he was bothered when upper income groups try to escape from the economic difficulties in the country by moving their funds abroad rather than cooperating and solving the community and national problems that are felt mainly by the poor.

He urged the forum participants to help the poor. "The poor cannot wait. They bear the brunt of our economic crisis. Let us then begin this Advent season by making meaningful sacrifices so that we can give substantial help to those in greater need." *With reports from Armand Nocum and Volt Contreras*

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Prosecutors . . .

(From page A1)

Mr. Estrada's alleged assumed names were included in the prosecution's request for the issuance of subpoenas to several banks to compel them to produce documents related to several accounts, including those of the President, First Lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito and his mistresses.

"In Citibank, we have information that he used the name Kevin but in Allied Bank, I think it's Kelvin," Marcelo said in Filipino.

Marcelo said the prosecutors' requests for subpoenas were based on reliable information that they had received and these were backed by evidence.

"These (requests for subpoenas) are based on evidence. We won't file any motion irresponsibly, on the basis of rumors. We would be hurt if we based it on rumors," he said.

He said that at the Philippine Savings Bank, "we're sure that the name of the President's good friend Laarni Enriquez is there. Her name cropped up in connection with Article 1 (bribery). Millions were channeled to her account."

The prosecution earlier said Jose Velarde owned a P1.2-billion account with Equitable PCI Bank, from which the P500 million for his trust account was drawn.

By this time, however, the accounts might have already been depleted.

Employees of Allied Bank disclosed that an account of Kevin Garcia with a balance of P99 million suddenly dwindled to P9 million after the account was linked to the President.

A source in the banking industry had said the money kept in Allied Bank by Kevin Garcia amounted to at least P600 million.

The sources said the money had been withdrawn and all records pertaining to the Garcia account were destroyed by the middle of December.

The impeachment court is expected to rule on the requests for the issuance of subpoena *duces tecum* (to produce documents) either today or Tuesday.

"These requests were addressed to several banks where we believe President Estrada, his wife and 'loved ones' maintain accounts," Marcelo said.

"We believe that if the Senate as an impeachment court allows these banks to present the bank records, we would be able to prove that President Estrada and his family accumulated millions of pesos in ill-gotten wealth," he said.

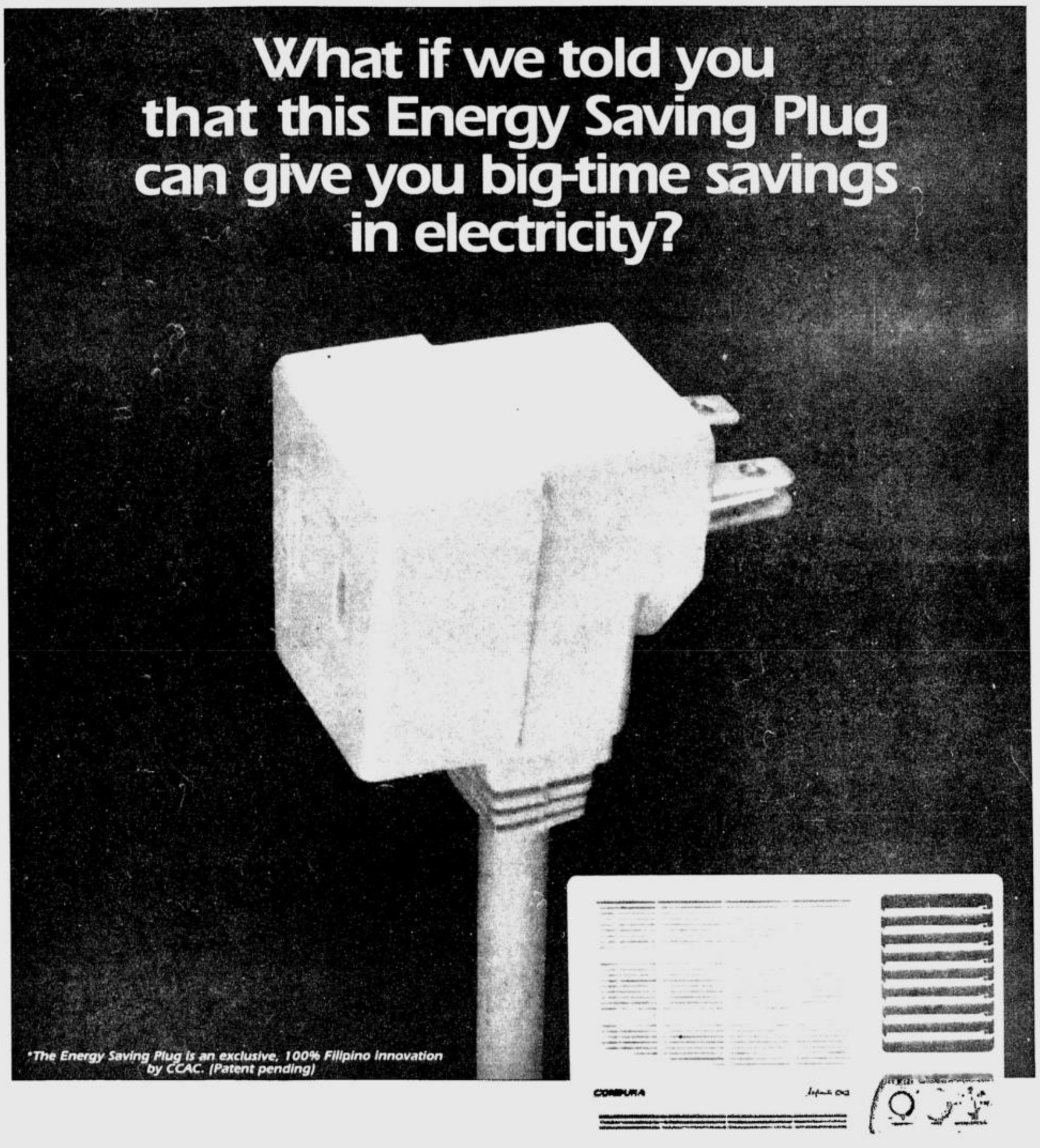
Marcelo pointed out that on Friday, a member of the defense panel stood up and told the court that they would object to the requests for subpoenas.

The defense said they would file today a written opposition to the requests on the grounds of "materiality."

"We fear the consequences of a court ruling that the documents are not material to the case. If that happens, the prosecution would not be able to present evidence that the President was able to acquire ill-gotten wealth. We might also be prevented from presenting evidence on the mansions," Marcelo said.

The President is accused, under Article 2-b of the Articles of Impeachment, of amassing ill-gotten wealth that was not reflected in his 1999 Statement of Assets and Liabilities. He declared a net worth of only P35.8 million.

The same article states that the President committed perjury when he maintained that he had interests in only three companies.



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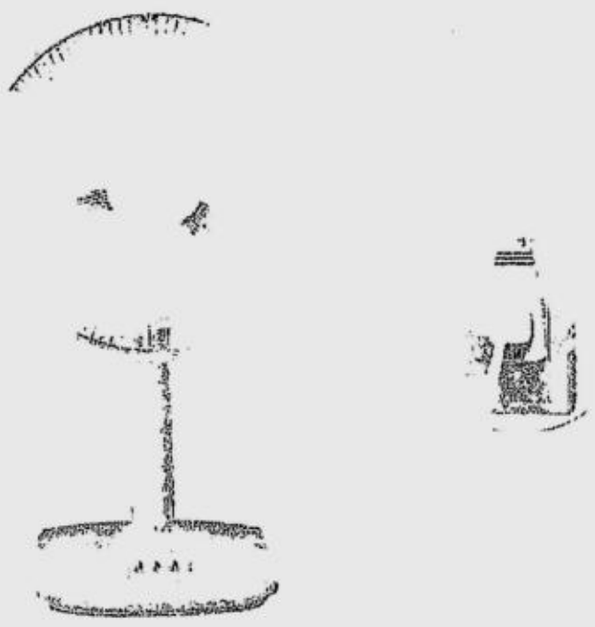

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Jimenez to sue Miriam for ₱50M

SOLANO, Nueva Vizcaya—Anti-crime advocate Dante Jimenez will sue Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago for P50 million for the humiliation he suffered when she had him and two women expelled and barred from the impeachment trial of the President, Jimenez's lawyer said here Saturday.

Ernesto Salunat said Jimenez will file the suit today.

On the 16th day of the impeachment trial on Jan. 4, Santiago accused Jimenez, along with Bettina Aboitiz and Rosanna Tuason-Fores, of unruly behavior and looking at her "provocatively." She demanded that they be expelled from the courtroom and cited for contempt. *Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Maceda reportedly eyeing DPWH job

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

AMBASSADOR Ernesto Maceda is reportedly asking to be appointed to head either the Department of Public Works and Highways or the Department of Trade and Industry.

If Maceda—the outgoing ambassador to Washington who earlier lost a bid to be appointed Executive Secretary—does make it to the Cabinet, some militant groups foresee a showdown between him and Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara.

The two former senators were Senate rivals during the Ramos administration. Angara was ousted as Senate President in a "coup" which installed Maceda as his replacement. Angara again bested Maceda during the 1998 presidential elections when President Estrada chose him as his running mate.

A source in Maceda's own party, the Nationalist People's Coalition, said Maceda was "asking" President Estrada to give him the DPWH portfolio.

The President has started reorganizing the Cabinet in a bid to win back public confidence in his scandal-ridden administration.

"This would explain why Maceda has been actively defending the President from damning testimonies in the prosecution witnesses in the impeachment trial," said the source who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The source said Maceda was always in Malacañang "following up on his request."

When he is not in Malacañang, Maceda is out leading pro-Estrada rallies in poor communities to project grass-roots support for the President, the source added.

The INQUIRER had sought an interview with Maceda through his Manila office but was told he had a "busy schedule."

100 arrested, ₱1.4B shabu seized in '99

BY D. VERIDIANO

MORE than a hundred foreigners were arrested and charged with drug-related crimes, and some P1.4 billion worth of methamphetamine hydrochloride, also known as shabu, were seized last year, according to a report by the country's top drug-busting center.

The report covered the anti-illegal drug operations conducted last year by various government agencies under the supervision of the National Drug Law Enforcement and Prevention Coordinating Center (Dep Center). The center is celebrating its second founding anniversary today.

The report said that most of the arrested drug pushers were Chinese nationals who, authorities have confirmed, were members of the notorious Hong Kong triads.

Categorized by nationality, the more than a hundred arrested drug pushers are: 77 Chinese, five Koreans, five Malaysians, four Germans, two each from India, Canada and Taiwan, and one each from Pakistan, Israel, Italy, Sweden, Egypt and Japan.

Deputy Director General Jewel Canson, the chief of the Dep Center, said that the volume of the illegal drugs confiscated from the arrested Chinese nationals comprised some 99 percent of the total 725.69 kg of shabu seized last year.

The most sensational drug-bust operation occurred on Aug. 24, 2000 off the coast of Sariaya, Quezon, in which some 365 kg of shabu were seized.

The report said that it was the biggest haul last year and the second largest in the history of drug law enforcement in the country.

Last year also saw the arrest of some 34,299 people in drug-related and substance-abuse offenses, including two students who were arrested for selling 942 "Ecstasy" tablets; and the filing of 12,474 cases in courts.

Red group denies threat

ANGELES CITY—The national command of the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan on Sunday denied issuing any death threat against Sen. Renato Cayetano.

A day after revealing that President Estrada had allegedly intervened in the Vizconde multiple murder case, Cayetano on Friday said he received a death threat from one "Ka Basil" of "RHB-III."

In a statement to reporters here Sunday, Red Olalia, RHB spokesperson, said it was "not the policy of the RHB to threaten anyone or announce threats, particularly death threat, though it warns against those who have done grave injustice against the people."

The RHB is the armed unit of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines, a splinter group of the 32-year-old Communist Party of the Philippines. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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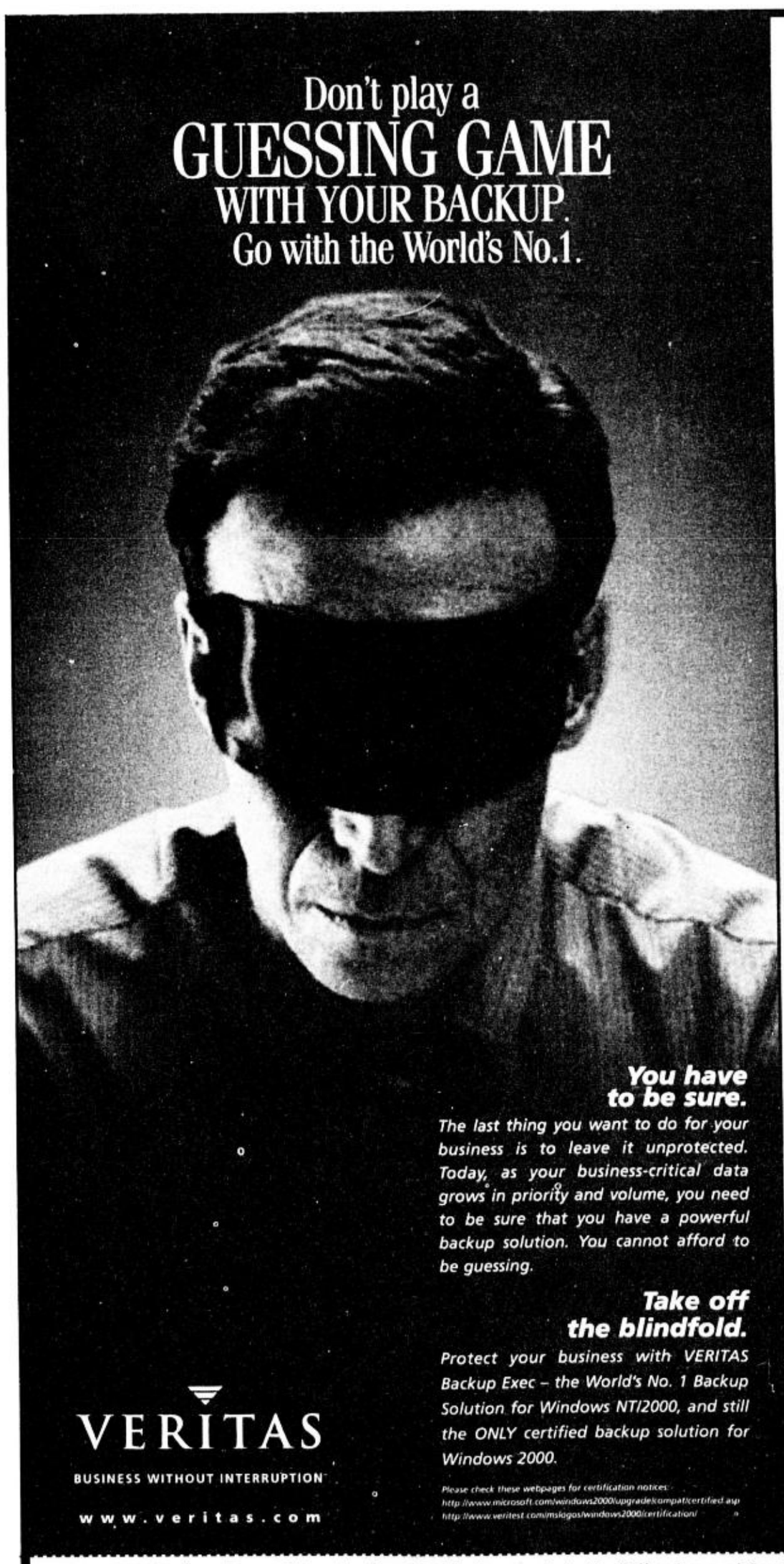

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Vol. 16 No. 38
ISSN 0116-2642

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments; Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794; Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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Erap, stay away from cronies with monosyllabic surnames

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT is said that President Estrada's unlucky number is 13 and he should stay away from persons with 13 letters in his name as they are bad luck (such as Jaime Dichaves; Erap's own name, Joseph Estrada, has 13 letters, which is probably why he changed it to Jose Velarde). It is now becoming evident that he should have stayed away from persons with one-syllable, three- or two-letter surnames—like Ang, Tan, Co, Go, Uy. They are really bad luck. (It was Atong Ang, for example, trying to insult Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson in his own turf by giving the Bingo 2-Ball franchise in Ilocos Sur to Singson's political rival, that started it all. And it was Erap's partnership with Dante Tan in BW Resources—as testified to by former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu—that has the strongest chance, so far, of kicking him out of Malacañang.) William Gatchalian and Jaime Dichaves are Filipino names but the two are actually ethnic Chinese ("Dichaves" in Chinese means, "have you eaten?").

Many other Filipino presidents had their own cronies—which, in the old days, meant only "close friends" but which have attained a more sinister meaning: shady characters who used their closeness to the President to push illegal deals that enriched all of them and impoverished the citizens. Erap's own cronies have one thing in common: they were unknown, small-time Filipino-Chinese businessmen who were his drinking and gambling buddies since his days as San Juan mayor. They helped fund his presidential campaign and were repaid with preferential treatment in government deals by a grateful President. They became big businessmen only after Erap became President and became well-known after their names were linked to scandals.

Espiritu said he resigned as finance secretary because he could no longer stomach the corruption in government. It is said that former Customs Commissioner Modesto Farolan also resigned because of the smuggling being done by those close to the President. Espiritu did not name the smugglers he often saw in Malacañang social functions, but could they be these same persons?

Their mistake was that they thought the President could do anything, even make what is illegal legal by merely issuing instructions. Erap thought so, too. Not being a lawyer, he didn't realize he was already overstepping his authority in his desire to grant favors to his cronies.

Erap has nobody to blame but himself and his friends. With friends like them, he doesn't need any enemies.

* * *

Speaking of shady deals, here is one in the Department of Energy which Secretary Mario Tiaoqui, a friend and classmate of Erap, has to explain. Tiaoqui has been sitting on a contract to supply woodpoles and crossbars to a project of the Rural Electrification Administration. The contract was bidded out and won by a supplier last February 2000. The rebidding (the original bidding was held more than two years ago) would be one year old next month.

A big portion of the financing for the woodpoles and crossbars is funded but the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) under the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF). That funding is not available forever; it has a deadline. If the project is not completed by October this year, the JBIC shall pull out the unused portion of the loan which, to date, amounts to $40 million. After October 2001, that loan will no longer be available.

This is a race against time because the poles and crossbars have to undergo a tedious process of cutting and treating. The delivery of the materials to the recipient barangays will also take time. Plus the red tape in the bureaucracy. October 2001 is only a few months away.

The bulk of the power transformers and other hardware have already been delivered to beneficiary barangays; others are on the way. But these transformers and other hardware, dumped like garbage in the barangays, are rusting away to the point of uselessness because the board of the NEA, chaired by Tiaoqui, sat on the contract for the supply of woodpoles and crossbars, without which the transformers cannot be installed.

Why are they doing this? Because they want to give the contract—or at least a part of it—not to the winning bidder but to a losing bidder. The second part of the rebidding was made last February. It was won by Nerwin Industries, a local contractor with Malaysian partners for that particular project. It submitted the lowest bid of US$11.7 million. Between Nerwin and the second lowest bidder, the price difference was $1.47 million for the poles and close to half-a-million dollars for the crossbars. Quantifiably, that means an additional 7,948 pieces of post and 20,967 pieces of crossbars.

But why does the NEA not award the contract? Because two bidders, one of them the winning bidder, arrived five minutes late at the bidding. Nonetheless, the bidding committee allowed them to participate.

After the bidding, a loser, needless to say, complained. The reason: the winning bidder arrived five minutes late, said the losing bidder, Pacific Synergy, which is backed by a US principal. Pacific Synergy is capitalized at only P1 million and has not operated since its registration, according to records at the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The NEA board now wants a "Solomonic solution": divide the award to Nerwin, Pacific Synergy and other losing bidders. Some bright boys also proposed using the unused portion of the JBIC loan for other equipment and supplies other than those specified in the original project proposal, and to change the specification for post from wood to concrete which would require another bidding.

Naturally the winning bidder is crying "foul!" What do you think?

* * *

TODAY'S Erap joke:

Erap went to his dermatologist because of a rash on his behind.

Erap: My behind is itchy again, Doc. *Bakit hindi gumagaling?*

Doctor: *Talagang hindi gagaling 'yan* if Ernie and Sonny don't stop kissing it.

Looking back

EDITORIAL

WE marked a milestone with the INQUIRER's choice of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. as the Filipino of the Year 2000. It's been 10 years since the INQUIRER started the tradition of selecting the Filipino of the Year. Its purpose was (and is) to applaud the best Filipino in any sector of society. By doing so, we hoped to reaffirm the nobility of our race. By doing so, we aimed to inspire others, whether public officials or private citizens, to be the best in their chosen fields of endeavor. The only criterion is for a living Filipino (or Filipina) to have made the most impact for the good of the country in the year just past.

As we look back, the INQUIRER is proud of its selections in the past decade. Because the reasons for their selections by the editors are the stuff that has made the nation's history in the past 10 years. Out of a natural calamity sprung the INQUIRER's first Filipino of the Year. Ten years later, Davide rises to confront a man-made disaster.

The distinction of being the INQUIRER's first Filipino of the Year (1991) goes to Raymundo Punongbayan. That year, the dominant Philippine story that made it around the world was the century's biggest volcanic eruption of Mt. Pinatubo. As the country's chief volcanologist, Punongbayan rose out of obscurity to direct the nation out of its apocalyptic ignorance of massive mudflow, sulphur, pyroclastics and lahar. About those strange words, he taught us all we had to know. And what we had to do. His was a calm, analytical mind that wrestled with the fury of a mountain that had reshaped the Central Luzon geography and the lives of millions of Filipinos.

Haydee Yorac was the 1992 Filipino of the Year. Because as the Comelec chair she proved that the Comelec could count. Presiding over the cleanest election the country had not seen in decades, Yorac restored the people's faith in the electoral process. We could believe in elections again rather than in revolutions.

At the height of the heated debate on family planning emerged the small but terribly witty and knowledgeable medical doctor Juan Flavier who was the 1993 Filipino of the Year.

Overseas Filipino workers won the 1994 honors. In at least 10 major destinations, they have become the workhorses of the world. Theirs are the hands that rock the cradles of future generations. The word Filipino had come to mean domestic helper. But be they ever so lowly, the OFWs in 1994 brought in about $2 billion or 2.5 percent of the country's GNP. But the social costs they've had to pay continue to visit the families they've left behind.

We hailed in 1995 the Filipino Everyman (or Everywoman) who bore the brunt of the calamities of 1995 with the legendary fortitude of the Filipino. He was the victim of the fury of superhowler, Rosing, by hoodlums in robes, in uniforms or in government. The victim of the highest crime rate ever recorded by the Philippine National Police. To top it all, the Filipino saw himself in Flor Contemplacion as we pleaded for her life.

We chose President Fidel Ramos for 1996 as did Time Magazine, naming him "World Newsmaker for Asia" for the stellar performance of the Philippine economy and for the transformation of the Apec summit agenda into an action program. The Philippines, Time noted, as host country to the Apec meet was first to maximize the participation of private business.

Ramos' other coup was to sign a political settlement with the Moro National Liberation Front, ending 23 years of conflict with the Mindanao rebels.

The Ramos achievements, it had been noted by US President Bill Clinton, were done within a democratic framework in a region at that time of mostly authoritarian tigers.

And yet, the overtures of the highly regarded Ramos for an extension of his single, six-year term were rebuffed by a multitude led by that unbeatable tandem of the Edsa People Power Revolt: Cory Aquino and Jaime Cardinal Sin. Aquino and Sin's joint efforts consolidated our democracy based on institution-building rather than personalistic politics. Aquino was to return in 1999 as the editors' choice. She also stopped President Estrada from tinkering with the Constitution.

Joseph Ejercito Estrada became the unlikeliest President and the Filipino of the Year in 1998. A college dropout, overweight, overly fond of the good life and of women, he was voted in by the teeming poor. Just by being himself, we had noted then, he did us proud. For he was a different President who wore his heart on his sleeve, and did not care who knew it. At the same time, we said that he had allowed the Marcos cronies to return in full force. We asked: When will he take note that these are the men and women who will test his resolve to be an honest and great President?

In and out

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WHEN you're in power, you call your office a public service. When you're out of power, you call it a public nuisance. When you're in power, you call clinging to your position performing a duty to the citizens. When you're out of power, you call it mounting a missionary position on the citizens. When you're in power, you call staying in office self-sacrifice. When you're out of power, you call it self-abuse. When you're in power, you discover all the reasons to remain in public service. When you're out of power, you discover all the reasons to go to the private sector. When you're in power, you call resigning a dereliction of duty. When you're out of power, you call it discovering a conscience.

When you're in power, you experience a change of heart after being impeached. When you're out of power, you discover the heart of change after being incensed. When you're in power, you embrace virtue publicly after being struck down by scandal. When you're out of power, you embrace virtue privately after being struck down by grace. When you're in power, you make an act of contrition and say you're sorry. When you're out of power, you make an act of resolve and say never again.

When you're in power, you call Ronnie Zamora a Jedi. When you're out of power, you call him Jabba the Hutt. When you're in power, you say he resigned because he is running for congressman. When you're out of power, you say he resigned because he is running from disaster. When you're in power, you call Edgardo Angara a savior. When you're out of power, you call him a sucker. When you're in power you call Edgardo "Angara." When you're out of power, you call Edgardo "Espiritu." When you're in power, you warn other people about the harm that their telling the truth would do to their children's physical welfare. When you're out of power, you warn other people about the harm that their lying would do to their children's spiritual welfare.

When you're in power, you say Robert Aventajado is the Abu Sayyaf's fiercest tormentor. When you're out of power, you say he is the Abu Sayyaf's fiercest competitor. When you're in power, you say he means to relocate the country's biggest garbage dump from Payatas to Semirara. When you're out of power, you say he means to relocate the country's biggest garbage dump from Malacañang to Semirara.

When you're in power, you remember that Ernesto Maceda was once so young and so promising. When you're out of power, you remember that he was once so young and so corrupt. When you're in power, you see that he is so old and still so clever. When you're out of power, you see that he is so old and still so corrupt. When you're in power, you say Ernesto Maceda is an ambassador of Erap. When you're out of power, you say he is an ambassador of Evil.

When you're in power, you call unexplained wealth the campaign donation of friends. When you're out of power, you call it the fevered imagination of a senator-judge. When you're in power, you call him Senator-Judge. When you're out of power, you call him Dagdag-Bawas. When you're in power, you think you can bribe St. Peter after living a life of lying and cheating. When you're out of power, you know you'll have nothing to bribe St. Peter with—you leave it all behind. When you're in power, you believe only the good die young. When you're out of power, you realize the bad die even younger—except that they don't know they're already dead. When you're in power, you add and subtract on the votes. When you're out of power, you add and subtract on the truth.

When you're in power, you call the group that's been bugging people's telephones Intelligence. When you're out of power, you call them Lack-of-It. When you're in power, you call people who peek through keyholes Peeping Toms. When you're out of power, you call people who listen through earphones Peeping Lacson. When you're in power, you hear a bomb go off and you cry, "Outsiders." When you're out of power, you hear a bomb go off and you say, "Insiders." When you're in power, you believe that government calls in the Special Forces to fight off threats against the citizens. When you're out of power, you believe that government calls in the Special Forces to use special force on the citizens.

When you're in power, you call killing men, women and children a tactical operation. When you're out of power, you call it a murder. When you're in power, you say your heart bleeds for the masses, and laugh. When you're out of power, you look at the bleeding mass that once was a child, and weep. When you're in power, you dream of adopting a child who has lost both legs in a bombing. When you're out of power, you do not dream of causing a child to lose both legs in a bombing. When you're in power, you vow not to allow the cowardly and desperate authors of the carnage to escape but to catch them and punish them. When you're out of power, you vow exactly the same thing.

When you're in power, you find justice a joke. When you're out of power, you find justice a Joker. When you're in power, you find legal gobbledygook a lot of razzle-dazzle. When you're out of power, you find legal gobbledygook a lot of Raul Daza. When you're in power, you find mendacity stimulating. When you're out of power, you find Mendoza Estelito. When you're in power, you say Jose Flaminiano has a lean and hungry look. When you're out of power, you say he will not need embalming when he goes. When you're in power, you manifest your body of evidence. When you're out of power, you manifest the state of your soul. When you're in power, you believe lawyers exist to screw the law. When you're out of power, you believe lawyers exist to love the law. When you're in power, you say "Objection, your honor." When you're out of power, you say, "Overruled."

When you're in power, you call it acquittal. When you're out of power, you call it tragedy. When you're in power, you call it The End. When you're out of power, you call it The Beginning.

* * *

I got a dozen letters from eagle-eyed Online readers of the INQUIRER, complaining about a typographical error in my column last Tuesday. My last paragraph carried the phrase "pubic opinion" instead of "public opinion." I checked my original and it does say, "pubic opinion." My thanks to my equally eagle-eyed editor, Jorge Aruta, who made the proper correction in the printed version. Unfortunately, the blooper got through online.

What can I say? The brain is faster than the hand, or the fingers. Either that, or I must be having a lot of unconscious thoughts lately…

For God and country

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE ATENEO de Manila Board of Trustees, Alumni Association, University Community, over 3,000 students and staff, scholastics, parents, etc. issued a full-page ad in this paper yesterday, appealing to the Ateneo alumni serving in the Estrada administration to "Resign Now" and abandon high school alumnus Joseph Estrada.

The Ateneo appeal, paid by donations of various individuals, quoted a passage from the great American civil rights and religious leader Martin Luther King: "There comes a time when one must take a position that is not safe, politic and popular, but one must take it because it is right." Stressing that the "nation's destiny hangs in the balance," the Ateneo appealed to its alumni's "sense of rightness," and challenged them to abandon an administration that "has failed to serve the people." Said Rizal's alma mater: "Let it be told and retold in every time and age, that when the hope of the people lived and died on your choice, you made the supreme sacrifice for God and country."

* * *

That stirring appeal is directed mainly at the Ateneans in Estrada's Cabinet, namely, Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon, Energy Czar Mario Tiaoqui and Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura. There's also impeachment spokesperson Ernesto Maceda. It is also aimed at the many other alumni such as Customs Commissioner Renato Ampil, Deputy BIR Commissioner Oscar Sevilla, PNOC president Antonio Lopez and director Ducky Paredes, as well as numerous alumni in government-owned and controlled corporations.

We can only hope that Siazon, Tiaoqui, Buenaventura and other Ateneo alumni would harken to their alma mater's call to withdraw support from the administration and hasten the dawning of a new moral order and economic rehabilitation. The Ateneo appeal comes so much later than the appeal of UST and UP for their own alumni's resignation, but it's better late than never.

* * *

"For God and country." Those were also the very words uttered by former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu when Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. asked him what made him defy fears for his and his family's safety and appear with such damaging testimony before the Senate. At that point of his testimony, everyone in the Senate session hall and the gallery and doubtless millions across the nation were hanging on to his every word. The witness bordered on breaking into tears and at times he couldn't speak right away. Once Espiritu exited into the hallway from the session hall, hearty applause met him. It was the first time he had unburdened what had been weighing on him since he left the Cabinet a year ago.

* * *

One of those hanging on to Espiritu's every word was the brother of his mother, Sen. Ramon Revilla. Espiritu had revealed that he consulted his decision to testify with his uncle, who heads the Bautista clan of Cavite, and Revilla told him, "Do what your conscience tells you to do." *"Kaya po naririto ako,"* Espiritu told the senator-judges. We hope that Don Ramon would listen to his nephew—if he cannot believe Espiritu's testimony, who else can he believe?—and follow his own advice about one's conscience. In fact, we hope Espiritu's testimony about "For God and country" hit all the senators in the jugular as well. Their vote on Estrada's fate has to be for God and country, not for money or other considerations.

* * *

By the way, it's not true, as Ambassador Maceda has been saying, that Espiritu "fled" to the United States because he had "perjured" his testimony. Espiritu knew exactly what he was going to say before the Senate, and the issues that Malacañang would rake up to counter his testimony. He could handle that, but threats to his life and his family were something else.

We at the Alay sa Kawal Foundation, which Espiritu chairs, were scheduled since last week to have a breakfast board meeting this Wednesday, Jan. 17, at Club Filipino, at Espiritu's own request: this means he had intended to be around, especially as the trial is winding down. But his sudden flight last Saturday morning indicates that, as lawyer Hernando Perez, who handled his direct examination, said, he had to flee because of serious death threats.

* * *

A lawyer conversant with the stock market points out that what may not have been clearly understood in the testimony of Ruben Almadro, Nonoy Yulo and Perfecto Yasay Jr. was how the President appeared ready to allow the stock market to collapse, just so he could protect his and his cronies' interests in BW Resources.

These witnesses' testimony showed that at one point in the manipulation of the prices of the BW stock shares, the BW float had ballooned to P1.8 billion. The "float" is the amount that brokers ought to pay for shares within a prescribed time; if they are unable to, then the stock exchange pays it, as otherwise the entire exchange would collapse, bringing down the economy as well. In order to prevent such a collapse, stock exchanges impose a "trading band," beyond which trading of a particular share is halted. For example, if the trading band imposed is 50 percent up and 40 percent down, this means that if a share priced at P1 shoots up to P1.50, or plunges to 60 centavos, trading is halted and the stock exchange asks the company selling the shares what's causing the upward or downward spiral. This is to protect investors against manipulation.

* * *

Over the months from May to November 1999, the BW share price exhibited wild gyrations, causing grave concern to the Philippine Stock Exchange, where BW shares were being traded, the SEC and finance officials. It was especially worrisome since the "float" could not be met by the PSE as it had only P90 million at the time (compared to other stock exchanges which had funds amounting to P3-4 billion). Upon recommendation of PSE prexy Yulo, SEC Chief Yasay narrowed the BW trading band to a more manageable 20 percent up and 15 percent down.

* * *

The purpose of narrowing the trading band is to discourage manipulations, since the trading profit shrinks. But apparently President Estrada's cronies were unhappy at that point as they were not making as much money as before. Yasay testified that Estrada ordered him to restore the trading band to the original 50 percent up, despite his protestations that neither the brokers nor the PSE had the money to pay for subscribed shares. A "second round" of manipulations by his cronies ensued.

But things got so bad that the float hit P1.2 billion with the payment deadline of 11 a.m. There were fears of the imminent collapse of the stock market. To avert it, said Yasay, the President was forced to call stockbrokers and even banks to fork out the payments which came at 2 p.m. In effect, said Yasay, there was a "technical collapse" at that time, which could have been averted had the President not interfered with the SEC's regulation of the trading band. From the testimony, it was obvious that the President was ready to sacrifice the country's welfare to protect his friends.

In distress

LETTER FROM MINDANAO

Carolyn O. Arguillas

BEFORE THE "bright boys" (and I mean that to be sarcastic) push the war mode button to implement their scenarios in Mindanao, here are basic facts to ponder on: Last year's shooting war cost millions of pesos of taxpayers' money in war materiel, relief assistance; cost the lives and limbs of hundreds of combatants and non-combatants, the displacement of nearly a million residents, etc.

But did it solve the problem? What that war showed everyone was nothing new: War did not, is not and will not solve the problem in Mindanao.

Oh, it did boost the popularity of Mr. Estrada, which, before the all-out war, had dropped to all-time lows because of the BW Resources and sweepstakes scams.

But will another war in Mindanao make the impeached President "popular" again? The answer is no.

And how will they justify this war mode again? That the MILF and Abu Sayyaf are back? Aren't these two groups, by Malacañang's declaration, already a "spent force"?

"Why wage war against a spent force?" asked Archbishop Orlando Quevedo of Cotabato City, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

* * *

In a "food and nutrition" survey of a sampling of 371 households of displaced families in Maguindanao, North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat on Nov. 1 to 15 last year, Oxfam-Great Britain reported the following findings:

- Eighty-two percent of the displaced families who depended on their own land to meet their food requirements before the displacement now have no access to their lands
- Sixteen percent occasionally gather leftover produce from their lands because they have nothing to eat; they risk their lives "in the middle of frequently erupting fighting in the places of origin between government troops and the MILF"
- Fifty-nine percent of the families that used their cash crops (coconut, banana, etc) to meet their food purchases before displacement, now have no access to these crops for the same reason.
- Fourty-nine percent of the families lost their livestock (carabaos, cattle, goats, ducks and poultry).
- Thirty-one percent of the families who depended on fishing now have no fishing tools and access to rivers and ponds and fear getting killed if they go fishing.

The loss of these food and livelihood sources, the Oxfam report said, "have prompted the displaced families to bank upon a basket of coping options that are threatening their present and future livelihood securities."

And what were these coping mechanisms?

- Forty-four percent of the families have sold off their non-productive assets like vehicles, jewelry, etc.
- Forty-six percent of the families have migrated to nearby towns and villages.
- Ninety-seven percent of the families have reduced the size and frequency of their meals or food intake.
- Ninety-eight percent of the families have changed their dietary pattern "drastically and are now buying cheaper and bulky or less nutritious foods."
- Fifty-eight percent of the families have withdrawn their children from schools because of their displacement and because of financial constraints.
- Fifty percent of the families have sold their productive assets—agricultural tools, animals, etc.
- Twenty-two percent of the families loaned money with interest to buy food.
- Twenty-one percent of the families sold their farmland, house and land rights to meet their food needs.

"In all practicality, the displaced families have already crossed their Food Insecurity stage and are now living in Crisis stage," the Oxfam report noted.

"The verifying indicator to this finding is the series of 'reversible and irreversible' coping options being adopted by displaced families, some of these implying a threat to their future food security. While ongoing conflict has completely dislocated these families, chronic poverty in some pockets of the region, El Niño induced drought before March 1999 and La-Niña induced floods during April-July 1999 have added further burden to their living in displacement."

The report added: "If the prevailing situation is allowed to continue, it is certain that these families would exhaust all their leftover household reserves and enter the 'Distress' stage where extreme hardships and consequences could be foreseen. In all reality, this worsening situation will continue with ever increasing negative impact on people's food and livelihood in the evacuation centers especially stretching their coping strategies to complete exhaustion. If external assistance does not flow into restoring their household asset base at appropriate times, extreme possibilities are certain to these families."

How else did the displaced families cope?

For food, they:

- Substituted rice with banana and cassava.
- Ate two meals a day instead of three and only one of those meals, with rice.
- Children were fed rice and coffee instead of rice and soup.
- Small families shared food and cooking utensils with larger families in evacuation centers.
- Breakfast served was coffee only.
- Savings were spent on food.
- Men went to safer areas for fishing and harvesting.
- They borrowed money to buy rice

For income, they:

- Sold banana, vegetables and fish.
- Worked in other people's land or in the markets.
- Gathered and sold firewood.
- Women set up small corner shops for buy and sell.
- Weaving, selling goats, chicken and selling or pawning jewelry.

The "food insecurity" stage is characterized by reversible coping, preserving productive assets, reduced food intake, etc.

The "Crisis" stage is characterized by irreversible coping, threatening future livelihood, sale of productive assets; while the "Distress" stage is characterized by "no coping," "starvation and death" and "no more coping mechanism."

Justice hurried is justice buried

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

EIGHT senator-judges would be enough to guarantee an acquittal of the President on each of the four charges for which he is being tried. But each one of them must deny the justice of conviction four times in a row when the cock crows on Erap's Judgment Day, slated for Feb. 12. (Incidentally, it was on Feb. 12, 1999 that American President Bill Clinton was acquitted in his own impeachment trial.)

This would be a politically sensitive situation for the acquitters. Since a separate verdict must be rendered for each of the four charges against Erap, each acquitting senator-judge, some say, would want to cast at least one vote for conviction to give an appearance of impartiality. By acquitting Erap on only three of the four counts against him, they could each claim, fallaciously, to be no weaker than St. Peter, who denied Christ a total of three times. But how many senator-judges are needed so all acquitters can do this and still prevent conviction? Eight is obviously too few.

A certain well-known formula, credited to the French mathematician Blaise Pascal, gives the number of ways that a set of N things can be combined into subsets containing M of them. (It's not for the arithmetically faint-of-heart, so I won't state it here, but it is a widely used formula taught to math students. You can even use it to calculate the odds of winning at *jueteng*, the illegal numbers game that started all this. Using Pascal's formula and *jueteng* rules, the number of ways you can choose 2 numbers from 1 to 37 simplifies down to be 37 times 36 divided by 2, or 666. So the odds of winning with a single *jueteng* bet is one in 666, the so-called "devil's number" in folklore.)

Anyway, back to the problem of the supposedly pro-Erap senators. If only 9 are available for acquittal, then Pascal's formula (or even a little commonsense figuring) says that there are 9 unique ways of selecting a subset of 8 to vote for acquittal from among the 9. But only 4 of the acquitters can actually vote for acquittal on 3 of the 4 impeachment charges. That still leaves 5 of them who might have to answer to St. Peter for 4 successive votes of acquittal. (A dermatologist could make some careful measurements to decide who those infamous 5 would be. Or they could cast lots for the pudendum-covering garment.)

Next, naughtily assume that there are 10 secret emulators of Judas, who want to masquerade as Peter, among the senator-judges. Now common sense cannot easily be used to figure out the number of ways that groups of 8 could be chosen from among the 10. But if you know Pascal's formula you can still do the arithmetic in your head and discover that there are 45 ways of ensuring an acquittal by 8 on each of the 4 counts. Among these, 4 different pairs of senator-judges can safely vote for conviction on one article. But that still leaves 2 of the 10 having to vote for acquittal on all four counts.

Finally, if 11 senator-judges can be relied upon for this carefully orchestrated hypothetical collusion, Pascal's combinatorial formula says that there are 165 ways of choosing a group of 8 from the 11 to vote for acquittal. Four of these combinations have trios from among the 11 voting for conviction on at least one of the four counts, allowing all 11 to cast votes of acquittal on no more than three counts. Of course, there can be no slip-ups or betrayals in this acquittal scenario.

I fervently want to believe that no senator will feign blindness to the mountain of evidence and testimony that paints Erap's presidency as a criminal enterprise, and that none would conspire in the manner just described. In our *balimbing* republic that would be recklessly risky anyway. Even if an execrable conspiracy like this were organized, one or more of the participants might get ideas about becoming a hero of history and turn the others into mustachioed goats. As Pascal himself once wrote, "The heart has reasons that reason knows nothing of." So I hope for some pleasantly surprising verdicts.

Cynical speculations predicting "guilty but acquitted," come from the manifest arrogance of some senators who shamelessly lawyer for the parties. Just because they are judges does not make them gods. Yet some are full of conceit. Are there no limits at all to their powers in the trial? Why does Davide allow senators to argue with witnesses and twist their testimony? As Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, he should not feel inferior to the senators, some of whom may have plenty of training in the law but openly profane it.

A near-unanimous vote in either direction is essential to help heal the nation in the post-trial period. A verdict of 15-7 or 14-8 or even 11-11 could be a recipe for national disaster. Such a "division of the house" would rip this country apart. Each senator represents a large political constituency. Such a narrow vote would guarantee a long period of devastating national strife.

So far, the tribunal has carefully avoided any divisive vote on the procedural issues, prudently going into executive sessions whenever that danger has arisen. So, why risk virtual civil war over the main question by imposing the artificial deadline of Feb. 12? Political ambitions be damned!

The search for consensus should be pursued till the truth is made manifest and the senators' voting, superfluous. The trial ought not to be a contest of political wills and bloated egos. Let all the evidence and testimony be produced. Make Erap testify as he has bragged he would. Subpoena the President, if necessary. Indulging his cowardice to face his accusers and disprove the charges is most unfair to the people and mocks the Constitution. The trial's outcome should not depend only on technicalities, dirty lawyer tricks, delaying tactics and time pressure.

Some people say that justice delayed is justice denied. But I say, justice hurried is justice buried, and the nation's future with it.

'It is a picture of hope'

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

REMEMBER the front-page photo of Crizele Acusin that I discussed in my Jan. 8 column?

It looks like I spoke too soon when I said the readers were unanimous in their objection to the sight of Crizele's mangled body. More letters came, pro and con, after the editor in chief explained her side of the story in the Jan. 9 editorial. Interestingly, the letters I received were the most in number, so far, in regard to any subject matter.

The readers who approved of the treatment given to the photo outnumbered those who were against. To even up the scale, I shall reproduce excerpts of three of the publication letters and thereafter this matter shall be considered closed.

Benjamin Vallejo Jr. wrote: "Terroristic bombings have been a fact of life for us born in the 20th century that the INQUIRER photo, although shocking, is definitely appropriate to bring the paper's message across that "IT CAN HAPPEN HERE!"

He said the newspaper did the public a service in making readers realize "that terrorist attacks: (a) target the common people, more likely the innocent; (b) can happen here and not just in Israel or any Middle East country; and (c) denying that it would not or did not happen here is to further the terrorists' objectives."

New hero

According to Bong Lucero, he cried when he saw the picture, the horror of it all, wondering how people can do such things to other people. But he believes "it is important that the dastardly act be shown exactly for what it was. Too bad for those who couldn't stomach it, neither could I but it was important journalism."

Victor Zapanta Manlapaz has taken a different view of the matter. For him, the *barangay tanod* who recovered Crizele's body from the wreckage should be the focus of attention.

Commending the *tanod* for his heroic act, Manlapaz said "it must take a whole lot of guts to walk into a train wreck and pull out the body of a bloodied little girl. I couldn't do that. My knees would buckle, my mind would paralyze my senses, my fear would overcome me. What if I was carrying what I thought to be dead and it moved? If she spoke, what would I say?"

Manlapaz concluded his letter with the words "I thank the Lord for the man brave enough to enter a deserted train wreck and do what must be done. The picture is not a reminder of violence and hatred, blood and gore. It is a picture of hope. That all is not lost and some people out there, deep down, still care."

* * *

The ongoing impeachment trial of President Estrada must be stressful, both physical and emotional, to Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the senator-judges, the Senate support personnel and members of the prosecution and defense teams.

It is no joke to sit through, and try to understand, six hours of witness examination and long-winded arguments by lawyers. Worse, with the TV cameras watching their reaction to the proceedings, the senators have to make a special effort not to fall asleep or look bored. The playacting can be very exhausting.

The lawyers are in a more difficult situation. They have to prepare for the trial early in the morning in time for its commencement at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. In the course of the proceedings, they have to be on their feet to conduct the direct or cross-examination of whoever is sitting at the witness stand.

And while one lawyer is on the job, the opposing lawyers have to be alert to object to the questions when proper or take such action that may be necessary to protect the interest of their respective clients.

After everybody has gone home, the lawyers have to confer among themselves to review the incidents that transpired during the hearing and find out if they overlooked anything or should take any action to cure whatever errors they may have committed.

If it is any consolation to the lawyers, they are not the only ones who are obliged to continue working even after the Senate premises have closed for the night. The same work stress is being suffered by the reporters who cover the proceedings and the members of the editorial staff who are tasked with putting in final form the newspaper for the next day.

Like the lawyers, the reporters have to be on their toes during the entire proceedings. Trips to the comfort rooms have to be carefully scheduled in such a way that nothing important that may transpire during the trial is missed. Considering the interesting characteristics of some of the senator-judges, the possibility of dramatic events suddenly cropping up cannot be ignored, hence, the need to be vigilant in monitoring the hearing.

The breaks taken by the impeachment court enable the reporters to go over their notes of the events that have transpired and prepare the initial draft of their news reports.

The editorial room of the INQUIRER becomes a beehive of activity as soon as Davide bangs the gavel to signal the end of the day's trial. The news reports submitted, supplemented by the editors' personal monitoring of the televised proceedings, are reviewed, revised or redone depending on the level of significance of the matters taken up in the trial.

With the trial usually ending at 8 p.m., the work hours of the reporters and editorial staff are correspondingly extended to make sure the news accurately present the events of the day before the deadline to "put the newspaper to bed" comes.

Like most work done under time pressure, errors in composition or grammar become unavoidable. When the mistakes are discovered the following day, the most the editors or proofreaders can do is shake their heads and make an effort not to repeat them in succeeding issues.

The weekend recess by the impeachment court enables the reporters and editorial staff to recharge their batteries in preparation for the following week's reporting of the impeachment trial.

When the trial ends by the second week of February, as promised by the contending lawyers, expect the loudest shouts of rejoicing to come from the newspapers' editorial rooms and the television networks that cover the proceedings.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City." Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Way to truth

"It is apparent that the women are the ones leading us to the truth. This is a big blow to the machismo of Mr. Estrada who treats women like second-class citizens."

—Sr. Ma. Antonetta Go on female witnesses at the impeachment trial

Erap's undoing

"He somehow managed to endear himself to the people by using women as trophies, but now the women are Estrada's undoing."

—Rep. Ernesto Herrera

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Where do we go from here?

AS the impeachment trial progresses, it is becoming more and more evident that some senator-judges have already cast their lot with President Estrada. It is very tragic that these senators, because of favors received, or perhaps still to be received or fear of loss of power and influence, would simply ignore the preponderance of evidence and just try to come up with their own "convincing" reason(s) and vote for acquittal. One wonders whether this is really what their conscience tells them to do.

The truth of the matter is that the testimony of Clarissa Ocampo alone, which is backed up by documentary evidence and corroborating testimony of lawyer Manuel Curato, is more than enough to convict the President. Reports said that when the President was asked about Ocampo's testimony he merely replied, *"Ewan ko sa kanya."* Now, if you are accused of such a serious charge and you know you are innocent would you not immediately want to face your accuser and belie her charges?

Mr. Estrada said he would want to testify at the proper time. But at the rate the evidence is piling up it is very unlikely he would still do it. It is reported that the prosecution would not anymore insist on his appearance at the impeachment court and just wants him to answer some written questions which he can answer with the assistance of his lawyers. But the defense lawyers, I heard, are objecting to the proposal.

So, where do we go from here? Indeed, the prospect that the trial would just be a farce is not far-fetched. And if the President continues to govern, it is like forcing us to eat food that is spoiled and rotten. Do we want this?—**RUBEN PEREZ, Kingsville Village, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City**

Women are smarter

ALTHOUGH Rina Jimenez-David, Neal H. Cruz, Michael Tan and an editorial in your paper successively have beaten me to the draw, as they would say, I am submitting this piece—better late than never.

Women are always referred to as the "weaker" sex, which is unfair and statistics have proven otherwise. According to the newspapers there are more widows than widowers which in effect shows that men are the weaker sex, not the fairer and braver women. With the preliminary basis laid down (as the honorable judge would require), I will now go to the substance of my essay—the women in Erap's life.

Circa 1947, while I was in first year college, I already heard about "sex slaves" during the Japanese occupation but only when Lola Rosa (bless her soul) came out in the open with her own experience was this confirmed—that the most barbaric and inhuman treatment was the lot forced on Filipino "comfort women."

Then in the year 2000 I was able to learn about the "most comfortable women" in President Erap's life. According to newspapers, there are now eight of them and still increasing. I say, most comfortable, because they are provided with mansions, businesses, cash and other perks not to mention free cars and security from the Presidential Security Group.

At the same time I praise and admire those "other women" with guts, the overseas Filipino workers, particularly the women who are appropriately called the modern heroes.

Lastly, we must salute the brave women who have testified in the current impeachment proceedings. Imagine risking their lives, testifying against the most powerful man in this part of the world.

I must admit I fear that any of those women could meet any harm. That is why I'm hoping and praying a novena to the Virgin Mary for the safety of Annie Ngo, Emma Gonzales, Shakira Yu, Rosario Bautista, Clarissa Ocampo, Emma Lim, Carmencita Itchon, including Sheila Coronel, Yvonne Chua and Eugenia Apostol, although I do not know them all personally.

As my late father would admonish me, a warning echoed wisely by the late Doroy Valencia: Never, never argue with a woman. Harry Belafonte puts it simply and well in his song that "women are far more smarter than men in many ways." To which I say, amen.—**EDUARDO A. TRINOS, 152 3rd Street, Sto. Niño Executive Homes, Barangay III, Cabuyao, Laguna**

Creating an atmosphere of uncertainty

FOR ONCE, the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police are in agreement in creating an atmosphere of fear and warmongering with the increased deployment of troops to Mindanao.

The AFP and the PNP employ similar tactics in order to instill fear in the hearts of the people and urge another war, conveniently laying all the blame on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

But how can the people be expected to believe these investigations when they are quite the expert in planting/fabricating evidence against innocent people and "extracting" confessions as seen in the recent Culiat 20 as well as last year's KPD 12?

The military solution has never solved the problem of strife in Mindanao that has resulted in the displacement of more than 83,199 families.

Yet the Estrada regime wants us to overlook this fact, and tolerate high military activity as well as blatant violation of human rights as if this is the price to pay for keeping peace and order in the land.

It is highly likely that all of these destabilizing acts in Metro Manila are all geared to create a condition where the only option would be the military option.

If this kind of mental conditioning continues, there will be no need for President Estrada, or any faction of the elite and the military, to declare an emergency rule as the people would already be immobilized with fear and stripped of their basic rights.

The scenario being painted by the military and police must not paralyze the people.

We must not allow them to be emboldened to pursue their fascist plans and ultimately stifle the voice of the people.—**SONIA P. SOTO, chair, Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya, 26F La Salle St., Barangay Silangan, Cubao, Quezon City**

LETTERS TO THE INQUIRER

Bad governance, judgment and behavior

WE, members of the Federation of Residents' Associations of Metro Manila, condemn in the strongest possible terms the violence perpetrated against the innocent Filipino public at the end of the year by the killers and their mastermind who bombed public places in Metro Manila and killed innocent and unsuspecting people during the holiday season.

While we demand quick and efficient work by the authorities to track down the murderers and their master, we will accept such efforts only if they are within the parameters of our democratic respect for human rights.

It might be timely to inquire why the police and other government authorities were unable to prevent this crime. Meanwhile we counsel ourselves not to succumb to panic but to take the proper precautions without disrupting the normalcy of our daily lives. Let us not be tempted to take the route of military rule for its so-called order and direction because this choice would curtail our rights as citizens and would be a poisonous solution with dire consequences for the future.

Our society is indeed in turmoil because of bad governance, bad judgment and bad behavior on the part of leaders. We have to address the national crisis in unity and courage to uphold the moral standards that we have set for ourselves as a nation and a people. Our future and the welfare of our children hang in the balance.

No to violence, no to human rights violations and no to military rule.—**MARIA ISABEL G. ONGPIN, president, Federation of Residents' Associations of Metro Manila, 40 Solar St., Bel-Air Pavilion, Bel-Air Village, Makati City**

Women's Hall of Fame

TIME and again, Filipino women demonstrate admirable courage and determination at important junctures of our history, among them Gabriela Silang, Teresa Magbanua, Salud Algabre, and Lorena Barros. These are some of the women heroes whose valor will always be remembered in the history of our country.

In the recent past, we have witnessed how courageous women stood up against the tyranny of the dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos. In the mass media, women led their colleagues in exposing the crimes and corruption of the Marcos dictatorship. While the women of Namfrel were the first to walk out to protest the fraudulent snap election, tens of thousands of women took to the streets to call for the ouster of Marcos.

Once again, we witness the intrepidity of women in the midst of the current political turmoil. Having had enough of worsening poverty and women's degradation under the macho-fascist rule of President Estrada, it was the women who first called for the President's resignation early this year.

And as President Estrada is being tried for crimes against the people, women have come forward to testify against him, like Emma Lim, Marichu Itchon and Clarissa Ocampo. These women defied danger to come out with the truth. Their words were daggers of truth that strengthened the public's declaration: Estrada is guilty.

It is only fitting that Lim, Itchon, Ocampo and other women of courage be elevated to the Filipino Women's Hall of Fame.

And as we elevate these women to the Hall of Fame, we also reserve a special place for President Estrada in the Filipino Women's Hall of Shame.

For more than two years, Mr. Estrada has been responsible for the unabated series of oil price hikes, the destruction of property and lives of our Muslim brothers and sisters, the tragic death of some 300 residents mostly women and children of Payatas, the blatant graft and corruption of his administration and the extreme debasement of women under his rule. Women have had enough.

Let Lim, Itchon, Ocampo and other women of courage serve as examples. Let us, in great numbers, come out from the confines of our homes and actively take part in the struggle for change. Let us harness women power to build a better society and a new future for our children.—**LIZA LARGOZA MAZA, secretary general, Gabriela-National Alliance of Women in the Philippines, 35 Scout Delgado St., Roxas District, Quezon City**

Deserving a second look

THE PERMANENT ban from the impeachment trial gallery of Dante Jimenez, Bettina Aboitiz and Rosanna Fores deserves a second look by the Senate Tribunal.

In my original petition addressed to Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the presiding officer, I pointed out that due process had not been accorded the three who were not allowed to explain their side.

It is possible that Senator-Judge Miriam Defensor-Santiago misunderstood the actuations of the three who claim they merely craned their necks to get a better view of Sen. Raul Roco.

Jimenez, Fores and Aboitiz are firm in denying that their behavior was disruptive.

It is to be regretted that the issue has hardened into a stalemate with the court's hands tied by considerations of face and rigid decorum.

I realize that Chief Justice Davide has to navigate his way through uncharted waters, but I am confident the wise and prudent presiding judge will find a way to gather everyone to see the path of fairness, justice and reason.—**REP. HEHERSON T. ALVAREZ, House of Representatives, Batasan Hills, Quezon City**

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The WORLD
MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

Megawati supporters mark party anniversary

JAKARTA—Tens of thousands of supporters of Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri flooded the streets of Jakarta marking her political party's 28th anniversary.

Indonesia's President Abdurrahman Wahid was also scheduled to attend the rally, in a show of support to his colleague.

The rally in Jakarta's main municipal stadium came just a day before rumored anti-government protests in the capital. Cabinet ministers and security officials have warned that unnamed hardliners opposed to democratic reforms were plotting to engineer riots on Monday in an effort to destabilize the government.

No group has so far said it was planning to stage demonstrations, which would coincide with a presentation in parliament of the results of a probe into two corruption scandals allegedly involving Wahid.

Megawati's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, or PDI-P, won 33 percent of the vote in the country's first free parliamentary elections in June 1999, and emerged as the largest political group in Indonesia.

However, the country's electoral college, the People's Consultative Assembly, chose Wahid, a Muslim cleric, as head of state even though his National Awakening Party won only 11 percent in the presidential race.

Senayan sports stadium, the venue for Sunday's rally, was flooded with Megawati supporters from Jakarta and other parts of the island of Java wearing the party's trademark red and black colors. Some carried banners reading, "Thank God Megawati was chosen vice president."

Celebrating its 28th anniversary, the party is latching onto an older party's birth. *AP*

El Salvador quake kills 138

SAN SALVADOR—A major earthquake rocked Central America Saturday, killing at least 138 people, most of them in El Salvador where authorities feared the toll could rise further after a landslide buried some 260 houses.

The strength of the quake was estimated between 7.4 and 7.9 on the Richter scale.

Rescue officials said that at least 136 people were killed in El Salvador and two in Guatemala, while more than 1,200 were missing and 500 were injured by the quake, which caused significant damage.

Rescue officials feared the toll could rise further after a landslide buried about 260 houses in the Las Colinas residential area, 12 km east of the Salvadoran capital.

To make things worse, tumbled power lines, landslides and collapsed roads made it difficult for rescue teams to reach the worst-hit areas.

Various seismological institutes measured the temblor at between 7.4 and 7.9 Richter scale. Experts said it was the strongest quake in the region for the past 20 years.

Salvadoran President Francisco Flores declared a nationwide state of emergency and his government issued an urgent appeal for international aid.

National Emergency Committee Director Mauricio Ferrer said a US military task force was expected to assist with the rescue and relief operations.

Officials feared the death toll could rise dramatically, with 1,200 people missing alone in Las Colonias, a middle-class residential area in the Nueva San Salvador suburb of the capital.

The lifeless body of a baby girl lay in the mud that covered Las Colinas, a few meters from her mother. Amid screams and sobs, people prayed aloud, asking God to save their relatives.

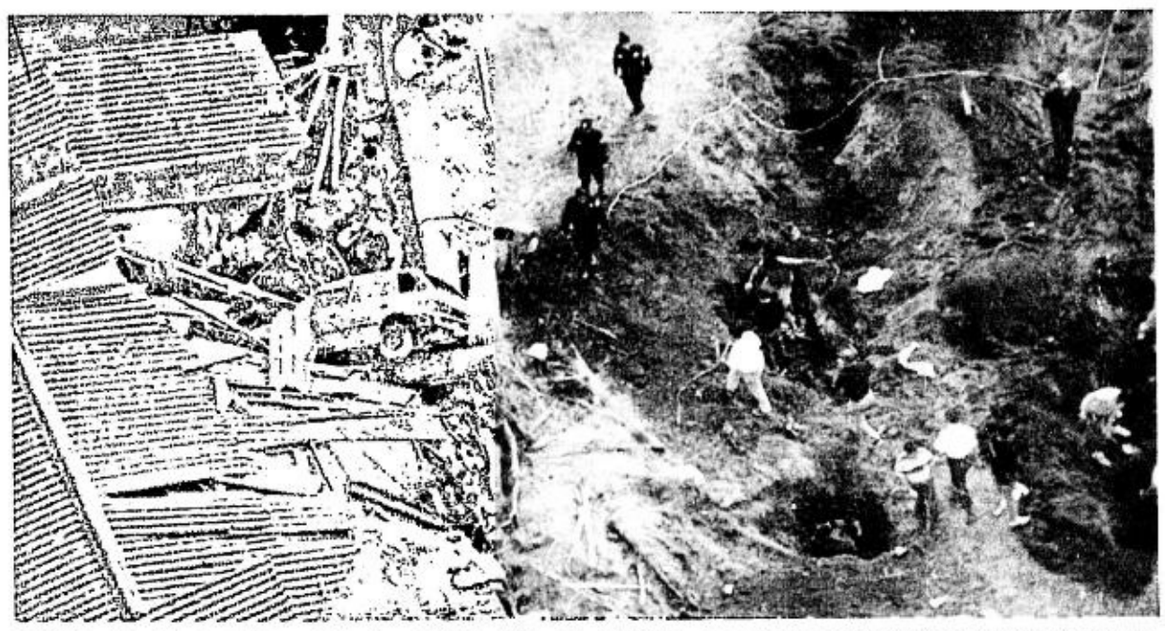
"We have to do everything we can to remove the rubble, and find out if there are people still alive whom we can save," said municipal official Oscar Ortiz.

The temblor was recorded at 11:33 a.m., and its epicenter was located off the Pacific coast of El Salvador, officials said.

It was also felt in Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and in southern Mexico. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damages from those areas.

In Guatemala, 2-month-old Karina died from injuries after her family home collapsed in the city of Moyuta, near the frontier with El Salvador, her father, Gregorio Quinonez, said.

Firefighters said a man died near the Guatemalan capital when a rock shaken loose by the quake crashed onto his car.



A VIEW of the Santa Tecla neighborhood of San Salvador in El Salvador, after an earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale rocked the country Jan. 13. REUTERS

San Salvador's international airport was closed Saturday as officials assessed damage to the runway and installations. Several hospitals were evacuated and stores in the capital shut down as soon as the temblor was over.

The government was planning to open a military airport just outside the capital for relief flights.

"There have been serious and painful human losses and a lot of material damage," Flores said in a message to the nation broadcast on radio and television. He broadcast the address after traveling to some of the affected areas.

Police were deployed in some of the worst hit areas to prevent looting, while military forces participated in relief efforts. *AFP*

Peres, Arafat meeting ends without progress

GAZA CITY—Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres made no apparent progress in meetings here Saturday aimed at ending months of violence, but further talks are planned.

Arafat and Peres, now Israel's Regional Cooperation Minister, headed the negotiating teams as Israel and the Palestinians finally returned to the negotiating table, following up the last-minute peace bid by outgoing US President Bill Clinton.

The two sides decided to continue their talks "in the next few days," Arafat's political adviser Nabil Abu Rudeina said, without specifying whether Arafat and Peres would attend the next meeting.

Abu Rudeina said the talks had been devoted mainly "to the negotiations on the final status" of the Palestinian Territories and "to the importance of reaching an agreement on all matters."

A spokesperson for the Israeli government in Jerusalem agreed that "a further meeting will be held in the next few days," and added that a date would be set Sunday.

The spokesperson said the aim of the discussions was to "consolidate the decline in the violence" and to "reach a positive conclusion before the end of the mandate of Bill Clinton" who leaves office on Jan. 20.

However Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo said that "the delegations discussed various issues and the issue of the final status, but we achieved no progress," and that "the Clinton initiative is not a basis for the peace process."

"The delegations will meet again Sunday or Monday," Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat told journalists, but he too said that "very big differences remain" between the two parties.

Peres left Gaza City late Saturday after meeting Arafat for two and a half hours, both one-on-one and also with negotiators from either side, a senior Palestinian official said.

After the departure of the Israeli delegation, Arafat held further talks with his team of negotiators, the official added.

Arafat and Peres, a leading Israeli dove and current regional cooperation minister, shared in the 1993 Nobel Prize for signing the Oslo peace agreement, which paved the way for Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Their meeting had been expected to be mainly devoted to working on the three-week-old Clinton peace proposals, Peres said during an interview with Israel's second private television channel.

He also expressed fears the peace process was entering an even more volatile phase with a US presidential transition and a looming victory by Israel's right-wing camp in Feb. 6 elections for prime minister.

"The objective of this meeting is to ensure that during this transition period, there will not be another wave of terrorism," Peres said.

The Clinton plan calls for Palestinian sovereignty over the Arab quarters of east Jerusalem and over the al-Aqsa mosque compound, as well as all of the Gaza Strip and 95 percent of the West Bank.

In exchange, the Palestinians are being asked to renounce their right of return to lands lost since the creation of Israel in 1948. There are an estimated 3.7 million Palestinian refugees living mostly in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. *AFP*

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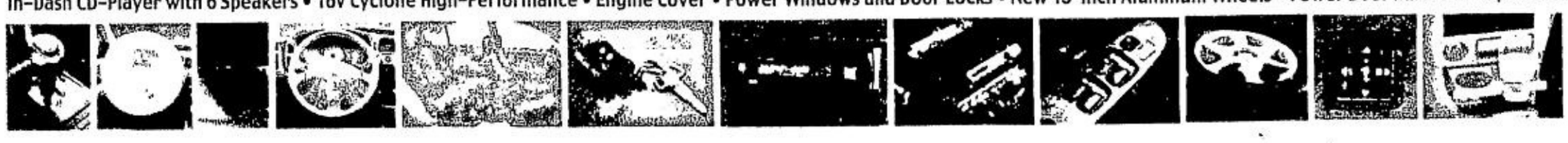

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Fujimori wants all charges cleared, eyes return

DESPERATELY SEEKING HELP REUTERS

Recep Karsikan is an ice cream vendor who weighs 250 kilos and needs a stomach stapling operation to keep from eating himself into an early grave. He is currently under the care of a hospital in Istanbul free of charge. He will be in the hospital's care in order to lose weight in six months' time.

TOKYO—Former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori on Sunday invited investigators to come question him in Japan, saying he will return to Peru only if cleared of all corruption charges against him.

Fujimori said a possible homecoming will also depend on the outcome of Peru's April presidential and Congressional elections.

"It will not be something for the near term," he said on a morning talk show on Japanese broadcaster TV Asahi.

Fujimori, in self-imposed exile, has been accused of secreting vast sums of money into his own personal accounts. He asked Peru's judicial authorities to investigate him here.

"I am waiting for them, but strangely, they have failed to come to Japan," he said. "I will cooperate fully. I believe they know that I do not have any illegal bank accounts."

Peru's Congress declared Fujimori unfit for office after he fled to Japan and resigned in November amid corruption scandals involving his former spy chief, Vladimiro Montesinos.

Congressional investigators say they have found no evidence linking Fujimori to Montesions' illicit bank accounts, but they say he bears responsibility for allowing his former adviser to organize a reputedly vast network of illicit arms dealing, money laundering and influence peddling.

Fujimori has denied unsubstantiated reports, received by Peruvian investigators, that he arranged the transfer of $18 million to three bank accounts in Japan from an alleged front company linked to Montesinos.

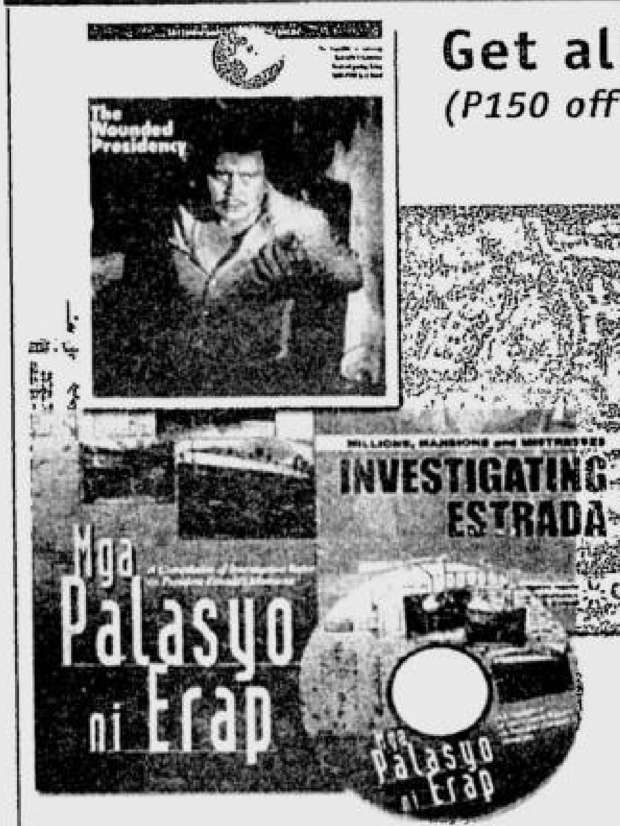
He said the allegation was planted by Montesinos to discredit him. Fujimori has also denied holding any bank accounts outside of Peru.

The Japanese government recently announced that Fujimori—the son of Japanese immigrants—held Japanese citizenship, allowing him to stay here indefinitely.

The 62-year-old former leader spoke a little Japanese at the beginning of Sunday's television program, which will be broadcast later in the US and Peru.

Fujimori told the show's host that he used to eat Japanese food three times a week in Lima. He also boasted of cooking sukiyaki, a popular Japanese stew. *AP*

THE IMPEACHMENT READER



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Experts: Cloned calf dies but its birth vital

WASHINGTON—In a potential breakthrough for the preservation of endangered species, a healthy Asian gaur—a variety of wild bovine—was born Monday but died 48 hours later from an unrelated bacterial infection, scientists said.

The gaur, named Noah, was born from DNA collected from the skin cells of a male gaur that were combined with cells from a cow, then implanted into another cow, named Bessie.

"The data collected clearly indicate that cross-species cloning worked," according to researcher Philip Damiani of Advanced Cell Technology, which coordinated the project, in an announcement Friday.

"Noah is the first individual of an endangered species to be cloned and then brought successfully to term by a surrogate mother from another, more common, species, in this case a domestic cow," Damiani added in the statement.

"His birth brightens the prospects that we can apply this technology to many species on the verge of extinction." *AFP*

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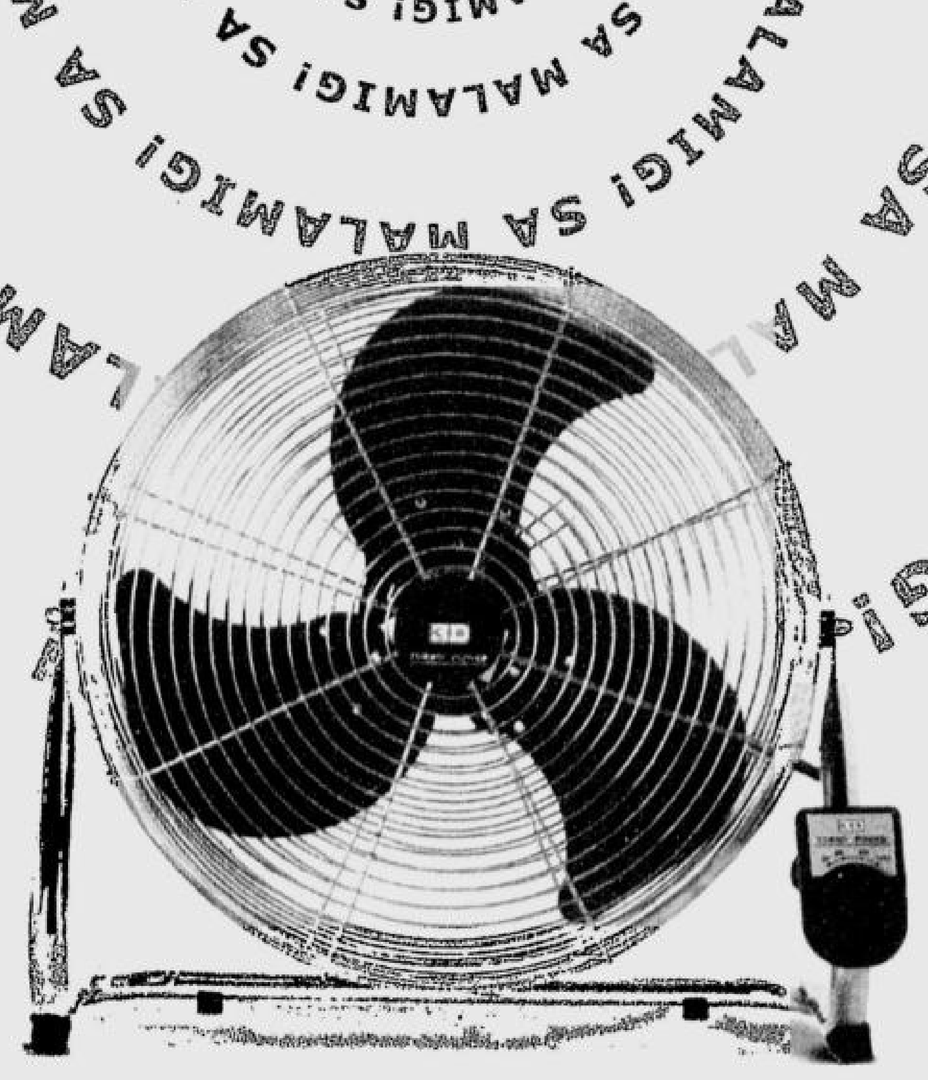

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Falun Gong holds global meet in HK

HONG KONG—The Falun Gong meditation sect, outlawed in mainland China and subjected to an often-violent crackdown there, staged a global conference here Sunday with followers saying they are locked in a struggle between good and evil.

"Over 100 of our great Falun members have lost their lives to spread the truth," adherent John Hu told the group assembled in Hong Kong—one part of China where speech remains free.

"But this won't change our beliefs and determination to practice Falun Gong, and I want to advise those who have treated us wrongly not to do it any more for the sake of their own future," said Hu, a real estate agent from Singapore, inside a crowded concert auditorium in Hong Kong City Hall.

Falun Gong is demanding the right to practice freely in communist mainland China and an end to the suppression that it claims has resulted in the torture-killings of 120 followers at the hands the mainland authorities.

"There's no human rights in China because you cannot even say a word about Falun Gong in Tiananmen Square," complained Hong Kong practitioner Fiona Ching.

Authorities round up and often beat Falun Gong practitioners on the mainland, but the sect remains legal in Hong Kong.

Falun Gong spokesperson Kan Hung-cheung said about 1,200 followers attended Sunday's well-publicized gathering that has drawn sharp criticism from pro-Beijing forces, who are furious that the "evil cult" can attack Chinese policies right on Chinese soil.

Falun Gong said the presence of 700 overseas followers from 23 countries shows the movement born in mainland China has become a worldwide phenomenon with many millions of adherents.

Hong Kong immigration officers barred 13 practitioners from entering the territory but said late Saturday they had failed to meet visa requirements and were not being kept away because of their Falun Gong affiliation.

"Even though there's some pressure, I'm happy that the conference can be held smoothly here," said Ching, a local clerk who read from a book by Falun Gong master Li Hongzhi on her way to the venue.

A life-sized drawing of Li, seated in a Buddhist meditation pose, was the central backdrop on a stage where Falun Gong members spoke about their experiences in the group.

One follower read aloud from a letter purportedly coming from another follower in Beijing who had been arrested and beaten in December—and later released—but he was not identified for fear of retaliation.

"There are evils which should not exist in this cosmos," the letter said.

Hong Kong' practitioner Hui Kwok-hong opened the conference by applauding the territory for letting the sect rent space in City Hall.

"We sincerely thank the government officials for giving us their special support," Hui said, although there is no indication Falun Gong has been treated any differently from any other group in Hong Kong. *AP*

A YOUNG Falun Gong follower, Tsang Tsz-long, 7, shares his experiences in front of a portrait of Li Hongzhi, founder of the spiritual movement, during a sharing period at the Hong Kong conference, Jan. 14. REUTERS

1st Kashmir elections in 23 years start today

SRINAGAR, India—Thousands of security personnel were on alert Sunday in freezing conditions to prevent Islamic militants from thwarting India-controlled Kashmir's first village elections in 23 years.

On Monday, the first phase of voting will cover Kupwara, Poonch and Rajouri districts close to the ceasefire line dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan. The eight-phase exercise will run through March.

A top separatist leader, Mirwaiz Omer Farooq, warned that the elections were ill-timed and could scuttle the peace process initiated by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Farooq's All Parties Hurriyat Conference and Pakistan-based militant groups demanding self-determination for Kashmir have asked voters to boycott the elections, which they say will legitimize New Delhi's control over the Himalayan province.

"Vajpayee's unilateral ceasefire against Islamic militants has brought some peace to the valley and has raised hopes of a peaceful settlement between India and Pakistan," said Jan Mohammed Wani, 47, a businessman in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu-Kashmir state. "The village elections could lead to more bloodshed in Kashmir."

The only majority Muslim state in India, Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since 1948, a year after Britain relinquished colonial control over South Asia.

There has been little democracy in Kashmir since an Islamic insurgency began in 1989 by militants demanding independence or a merger with Pakistan. Though nominated village councils have functioned off and on, no direct elections to the village councils have been held here in more than two decades.

"Panchayats," or village councils, organize community programs and help build local infrastructure in India, a country where nearly 70 percent of its 1 billion people live in hundreds of thousands of villages. *AP*

Report says Clinton submits plan to aid opposition in Iraq

WASHINGTON—US President Bill Clinton, operating on instructions from Congress, has developed a plan to help opposition groups spread $12 million humanitarian relief inside Iraq, The Washington Post reported.

The paper said the plan submitted last Wednesday calls for distribution of food, medicine and other forms of humanitarian relief inside government-controlled areas of Iraq by the Iraqi National Congress, the main umbrella group for forces opposing Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Congress appropriated funds for the program last fall and gave the administration until this month to develop a plan for carrying it out.

The Post said that under the plan, developed in close consultation with the INC, opposition members will make clandestine forays into government-controlled areas to distribute relief supplies and propaganda.

The paper said INC leaders view the operation as a precursor to an armed insurrection they hope to mount one day with the help of US weapons and air support.

Congress passed, and Clinton reluctantly signed, the Iraq Liberation Act in 1998 authorizing the Pentagon to provide the opposition as much as $97 million in arms and military training.

However, the Pentagon has spent barely $2 million of that amount.

Some in Congress have criticized the administration for moving too slow in attempts to destabilize the Iraqi government.

President-elect Bush pledged strong support for the Iraq Liberation Act during his campaign and several of his top advisers have been vocal in the criticism of Clinton's policy, including Secretary of Defense-designate Donald H. Rumsfeld.

The Post quoted a Bush spokesperson as saying she was uncertain whether Bush's foreign policy team was consulted on the eight-page plan Clinton sent to Congress, but that, in any event, there would be no comment from the incoming administration until it takes office next Saturday. *AP*

Malay rights group slams police raid

KUALA LUMPUR—The Malaysian rights group Aliran Sunday criticized as "high-handed" a police raid on a farm settlement run by a Christian group.

About 20 policemen armed with a search warrant on Friday cut the gate chain at the settlement in Tapah in the northern state of Perak.

New Testament church supervisor Tan Ai Gek was quoted as saying that guests, including some from Taiwan, Tahiti and the United States, were treated rudely as police broke locks to enter their rooms to demand identification papers.

Tan was quoted by Saturday's Star as saying a boy aged 17 was briefly handcuffed when he could not immediately produce his passport. No arrests were made.

The raid was mounted a day after the national police chief Norian Mai said the "Mount Hebron" religious settlement posed no security threat.

Norian was responding to a report in a Malay-language newspaper that villagers were concerned about its allegedly secretive activities

"They (police) gave the impression that the group was being monitored and posed no danger," Aliran president P. Ramakrishnan said.

"Suddenly to break in was a very high-handed action. The police could have called the leaders in for a dialogue or could have written." *AFP*

HOLY MEN'S BATH REUTERS

Hindu holy men wait on the banks of India's holiest river, the Ganges, before a holy dip during Maha Kumbh Mela or Great Pitcher Festival in the northern India city of Allahabad, Jan. 14. The "royal bath" day began about an hour before dawn with elite holy men or sadhus taking turns to immerse themselves in the Ganges at the confluence point known as the "sangam." The festival, which takes place every 12 years, attracted about 70 million people during a six-week duration.

Surgeon says Reagan in stable condition

SANTA MONICA, California—Former US president Ronald Reagan was recovering in hospital Saturday after "successful" surgery to repair a fractured right hip, his doctor said.

The operation on Reagan, who turns 90 next month, was performed early Saturday after he broke his hip the previous evening in a fall at his home in the upscale Los Angeles suburb of Bel Air.

"He's doing well, we're happy," surgeon Kevin Ehrhart told a news conference. He added, however: "It's a serious injury" and his prognosis is "guarded."

"He's a patient (who is) 90 years old with other medical problems," Ehrhart said.

Reagan, who suffers from Alzheimer's, was admitted to St. John's Health Center in Santa Monica, just west of Los Angeles, late Friday. The operation began at 8:30 a.m. Saturday and lasted just over an hour.

"The various parts of the fracture were put together with a series of... pins and screws," Ehrhart said. Though the former president is nearly 90, "he (has) very healthy tissue, very strong, healthy bone."

He is in stable condition and expected to remain in hospital for the next "week to 10 days," he added. *AFP*

REUTERS

A SURGEON at the Santa Monica hospital, Dr. Kevin Ehrhart, displays a pin similar to the one that was inserted into the hip of former president Ronald Reagan, Jan. 13.

Family of most-wanted fugitive leaves island

SYDNEY—The family of Australia's most-wanted fugitive appeared to be making moves to leave their Spanish island home after authorities ordered them out of the country.

Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio reported Sunday that the wife and two daughters of failed businessman Christopher Skase drove to a Majorca airport but Skase remained at the family's home and was reportedly unable to travel because he has a stomach tumor.

Skase, 51, is wanted in Australia on 30 white collar crime charges linked to the collapse of his Qintex hotel, resort and media empire with corporate debts of $840 million.

Skase fled to Majorca in 1991 and Spanish authorities rejected an Australian extradition request three years later, ruling he was too ill to travel.

But late last year another Spanish court ruled Skase had been staying illegally in the country and ordered him out.

Australian authorities have sent warrants for his arrest to Interpol and Justice Minister Amanda Vanstone said this week Canberra would do all it could to ensure Skase is brought to justice.

Sydney tabloid The Sunday Telegraph reported that Skase's wife, Pixie, described her husband as "critically ill." *AP*

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

107 Filipinos deported from Sabah

ZAMBOANGA CITY—One hundred seven Filipinos were deported from Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia and arrived here Friday penniless, tired, hungry and displaced, according to Abe Abduhalim, city social welfare officer.

The deportees were mostly natives of Basilan, Jolo, and Bongao, Tawi-Tawi who tried looking for jobs in Malaysia.

"Unfortunately, because of (their) illegal entry, they were intercepted by Malaysian authorities (while they were) trying to get inside (Malaysia) so they were arrested and deported back here," Abduhalim said.

He said more than 2,000 Filipinos working in Malaysia were deported to the country last year after the kidnappings of tourists by the Abu Sayyaf on Sipadan Island in April.

Some of the deportees who were interviewed claimed that they were maltreated by Malaysiam authorities even after they had presented documents showing that they were legal workers in Malaysia.

Nadzmi Ami, 56, said she went to Malaysia just to attend the burial of her son "and after 10 days in Malaysia, I went home."

"But in the middle of the sea, Malaysian officers apprehended the boat and they arrested me because my name was not in the boat's manifest."

Amin was reported jailed for 22 days in Malaysia.

"I was not fed properly, they handcuffed me all the time and I was placed in a congested dark cell," Ami said.

Ibrahim Tantung, 62, who works as a carpenter in Malaysia, revealed that he has been staying in Sandakan since 1974 and that he was arrested merely "because I failed to bring my IC (identification card) in going to downtown."

Tantung said he has no more relatives in the Philippines, "as we have already established our residency in Malaysia for more than 20 years now. My wife and children are already studying and working there."

"They hit me, they undressed me for more than a day, they didn't allow us to talk with other prisoners. If caught, we were put inside a small, dark cubicle for more than a week," Tantung said.

Despite the reported abuses, majority of the deportees would still like to return to Malaysia and continue their work.

"We don't have jobs here (in the Philippines). Nobody would hire us. We have no educational attainment," Nadzmer Ismael said.

Tantung claimed that he has to return to his work and to his family even if discrimination against Filipinos in Malaysia is very strong.

A Malaysian girl identified as Nuraina Ramla was also held by the Malaysian police for failing to bring her IC and was jailed for 18 days without investigation or charges.

She claimed in Malay that she was mistaken as a Filipina.

"But, I'm (a) true-blooded Malaysian. I am not a Filipino," Ramla said through her interpreter.

DSWD officials are also working for Ramla's immediate return to Malaysia with the help of the Bureau of Immigration (BI).

As this developed, Abduhalim assured that the 107 deportees would be provided with food, a little cash for their transportation in going to their respective provinces and clothes.

Abduhalim expressed optimism that they could send the deportees to their provinces soon. He also gave assurances that he would help the deportees live normal lives in their home provinces. *Julie Alipala-Inot, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Plebiscite set for Pampanga town cityhood

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—A plebiscite to decide on the cityhood bid of this capital town will be held early next month after President Estrada on Jan. 5 signed Republic Act 8990 or the law converting this town into a component city of Pampanga.

RA 8990, which was approved by the bicameral conference committee on Nov. 28 last year, is a product of the merger of House Bill 6766 and Senate Bill 2192 that pushed the creation of the City of San Fernando.

Mayor Reynaldo Aquino said the Commission on Elections would decide on the final schedule of the plebiscite.

He said a simple majority vote is needed to convert this first class municipality into a component city. The number of registered voters here is about 90,000.

Should residents vote for cityhood, San Fernando would become Pampanga's second city after Angeles.

Aquino said local officials have been lobbying for the conversion of this town into a city since 1995.

He urged residents to cast their votes during the plebiscite, as he assured them that taxes would not be raised once this town becomes a component city. He said a five-year moratorium on tax increases would be implemented.

Aquino said more investors would be coming here if this town becomes a city.

In November last year, the SM Prime Holdings Inc. opened the three-level, 60,000-square meter SM City Pampanga along the boundary of this town and Mexico.

Aquino said San Fernando's P70-million internal revenue allotment would increase to about P200 million if residents endorse RA 8990. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Abra town candidate for hot spot list

BAGUIO CITY—The recent killing of an Abra municipal councilor by a mayor's son may put Lagayan, Abra in a list of election hotspots in the Cordilleras, said a top Commission on Elections official in the region.

Rodolfo Tabangin, outgoing Comelec Cordillera director, said the Comelec is finalizing with the Philippine National Police the list of election hotspots in the region, but added that the status of Lagayan town is being discussed.

Police reports said Lagayan Councilor Leonardo Parado, 45, was shot dead on Jan. 2 by Jen-jen Luna, son of Mayor Cecilia Luna.

Reports said the young Luna and his companions were aboard his car when they encountered the jeepney that Parado was riding in at Barangay Pulot in Lagayan, north of the capital town of Bangued.

Police said when the two vehicles stopped, Luna fired at the jeepney and hit Parado in his back. Luna reportedly fired again when the jeepney sped away.

The office of the provincial prosecutor in Bangued, Abra filed charges of multiple attempted murder against Luna and his companions, a John Bersamira, a Boy Bersamira and three others.

Police have yet to arrest Luna and his companions. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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TERESA LIM
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VERONICA GALLARDO
305 M. H. Del Pilar, Maysilo, Malabon
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A PORTION of the proposed landfill site on Semirara Island. EDWIN BACASMAS

Antique folk wary execs selling out

By Hazel Villa
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique–Widow Marilyn Soriano was sick when she heard on radio here that there was a planned rally on Dec. 22 against plans to dump garbage on Semirara Island.

Though she didn't get any better, she forced herself to join the rally which turned into an impromptu symposium because the much-awaited presidential adviser on flagship projects, Robert Aventajado, did not arrive.

The 43-year-old from Barangay Aureliano of Patnongon town said she later joined other like-minded Antiqueños in expressing their opposition to the dump at the session of the Antique Provincial Board on that day.

"We don't agree to Manila's garbage being dumped on Semirara because of what it will do to our children. I cannot sleep at night. I cry and pray thinking about this.

What will happen to us?" asked Marilyn.

"I love my child. Why do we have to sacrifice like this? Why do they have to throw their garbage here?" said this mother of a 17-year-old boy studying at the Aureliana National High School.

Aureliana, a farming community is 21 kilometers from this capital town.

Marilyn tends to a vegetable garden "and some chicken" for a living. Her husband Reynaldo died of a heart attack on Oct. 25, 1998 in Manila where he worked as a security guard.

Marilyn said she lamented the lackadaisical attitude of Antique's politicians toward the garbage issue.

"Governor (Exequiel) Javier signed the certificates of willingness and Congressman Vito (Jovito) Plameras was using the Semirara issue so he can get the P47 million funding for his projects. What do they make of us Antiqueños?" said Marilyn in Karay-a.

Javier revoked the certificate of willingness on Dec. 22. Plameras denied using the Semirara issue as a means of getting funding.

Plameras earlier requested Aventajado to help in the speedy release of P47 million for his projects These are the P17 million for the construction of 11 farm-to-market roads and P30 million for the rehabilitation of 17 bailey bridges

Aventajado, in a letter to Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno, endorsed the Plameras' request because it would help win the congressman's support for the dump project.

"It may also be mentioned that these (Plameras') projects are considered not only critical to the development of the area, but likewise essential to the establishment of an interim sanitary landfill for Metro Manila upon the closure of the San Mateo Landfill on Dec. 31, 2000," wrote Aventajado to Diokno in a letter dated Dec. 21, 2000.

Plameras, in a statement, said Aventajado's using the landfill project to justify the funding request was "a matter between them (Aventajado and Diokno)."

Javier has to frequently answer questions from citizens asking him why he revoked the certificate of willingness only on Dec. 22 when it had been with him since March 2000.

"Why did he have to make that certificate in the first place?" asked vocal and emotional Marilyn.

While Antique's politicians bicker over the whys of the Semirara issue, Marilyn and her neighbors vowed to join a big rally together with Boracay residents on Tuesday.

"Even if we are poor and live a hand-to-mouth existence, it's okay for as long as the environment is clean," said Marilyn.

Group joins call to stop CARP scheme in Luisita

By Cynthia Balana

AN ALLIANCE of farmers and fishermen has joined workers at the Hacienda Luisita in seeking the immediate nullification of a stock-sharing scheme that was conceived during the administration of former President Corazon Aquino.

Julian Llorera Sr., head of the Aniban ng mga Magsasaka, Mangingisda at Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (Amma), said the stock distribution option implemented in the estate of Ms Aquino's family was one of the major stumbling blocks to the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

The stock option was carried out to avoid dividing Hacienda Luisita among its workers under CARP, a centerpiece program of Ms Aquino.

"It was a ploy used by the Aquino administration to ensure that the Hacienda Luisita owners and other big landowners would be able to maintain their grip over their landholdings," said Llorera.

The group filed a resolution seeking the nullification of the scheme. The resolution, handed to Agrarian Undersecretary Conrado Navarro, asked that the stock option scheme be declared null and void because of its alleged failure to improve living conditions of farmers in the hacienda.

Ex-Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, brother of Ms Aquino, said the unrest in the hacienda was the work of Agrarian Secretary Horacio Morales.

Cojuangco accused Morales of deceiving the people on the nature of the stock option scheme in the hacienda.

He said those pushing for the scheme's nullification are not real farmers or workers in the 5,000-hectare estate.

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Ex-SBMA exec dies

OLONGAPO CITY—Lawyer Ferdinand Aristorenas, former chief operating officer of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, died Saturday after suffering a heart attack. He was 39.

Aristorenas, who received his law degree from the University of the Philippines (Class 1987), was "one of the original volunteers (of SBMA) who had foregone a lucrative legal career for a noble cause in the service of his country," said former SBMA Chair Richard Gordon.

The UP's Upsilon Sigma Phi fraternity, of which Aristorenas was a member, is offering a Mass for him at the SBMA chapel at 8 p.m. on Jan. 16.

His remains lie at the People's Hall at the Olongapo City Hall Complex. He will be buried on Jan. 18 at the Sta. Rita Memorial Park here after a Mass at the SBMA chapel. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

ANG FEARLESS FORECAST NG BAYAN...SA NGAYON.

GUARDIA SENADO

Consumers & Communicators for Good Governance • January 2001 • Volume 4

MALINAW NA PARA SA BAYAN

Hatol kay ERAP: GUILTY!

Judge-Senator Raul Roco
Bakit Halata?
Kino-colloquy niya si Miriam. Mabuti naman.

Judge-Senator Franklin Drilon
Bakit Halata?
Pina-contempt-of-court ang Fortun brothers.

Judge-Senator Teofisto Guingona
Bakit Halata?
Pinandilatan si Enrile.

Judge-Senator Juan Flavier
Bakit Halata?
Nainip sa kahihintay sa testimonya ni Kissa Ocampo.

Judge-Senator Loren Legarda Leviste
Bakit Halata?
Nagbuking kay Mendoza.

Judge-Senator Raul Cayetano
Bakit Halata?
Madalas saluhin ang prosekusyon.

Judge-Senator Serge Osmeña
Bakit Halata?
Napapa-iling na lang kay Miriam.

Judge-Senator Jun Magsaysay
Bakit Halata?
Una siyang nakaalam na ang mga bintang ay maaaring totoo.

Judge-Senator Nene Pimentel
Bakit Halata?
Bukas ang kanyang isip sa ebidensiya.

Judge-Senator Rodolfo Biazon
Bakit Halata?
Galit sa legal gobbledygook.

Judge-Senator Robert Barbers
Bakit Halata?
Babalik siya upang magbigay-hatol.

MAY LINAW PA

Hatol kay ERAP: ? ? ?

Judge-Senator Blas Ople
Baka sakaling mamulat sa katotohanan at magiwan ng mas marangal na pangalan sa ating kasaysayan.

Judge-Senator Francisco Tatad
Kapag may utak at konsensiya, mahirap magbulag-bulagan sa dami ng ebidensiya.

Judge-Senator Gregorio Honasan
Gaano katagal ba ang bayad-utang mo kay Enrile? Kailangan mo nang mag-isip para sa iyong sarili.

Judge-Senator Robert Jaworski
Itataya mo ba ang iyong popularidad para sa bulok?

Judge-Senator Ramon Revilla
Gising na siya! Nakapagsasalita na, kahit minsan wala sa lugar! Sana'y tamang manok ang tayaan mo!

Judge-Senator Nikki Coseteng
Ang sabi mo, kumalas ka sa partido upang maging patas ang iyong pag-husga. Tignan natin...

Judge-Senator Vicente Sotto
May hangganan ang pag-kukumpare.

UBOD NG DILIM ANG BUKAS/ Hatol kay ERAP: NOT GUILTY

Judge-Senator Miriam Santiago
Bakit Halata?
Walang kaduda-dudang para kay Erap! Natitililing ang bayan sa mga ginagawa mo.

Judge-Senator Juan Ponce Enrile
Bakit Halata?
Kulang na lang umupo sa tabi ng defense. Pero maari pa ring bumaligtad gaya noon. Lalo na kung mas pabor sa kanya.

Judge-Senator John Osmeña
Bakit Halata?
Kapag nakatikim ba ng delihensiya, mas mahirap kayang manimbang ng ebidensiya?

Judge-Senator Tessie Aquino-Oreta
Bakit Halata?
Sinauli daw ang kanyang balato, kaya dapat lang daw na isauli din ang kinita ni Cayetano. Pareho ba iyon? Kaya, hindi patas ang laban sa kanya.

ANG SCORE NGAYON

Maysala: 11

Walang Sala: 4

Puwede pang sa bayan o sa palasyo: 7

Malapit na bang bumigay ang ilang Senador? May nagwawala, may nag-aakala, may napipikon, may nagpapasiklab! Mahirap ba suma-ilalim sa mata ng publiko?

Isang Babala sa Taong bayan: Nakikita na natin ang mga panlalansi at pakana ng Defense team. Dapat siguro tawagin silang Defens(ive) Team:

1. **Si Mendoza:** Kakunchaba ba siya sa cover-up ni Dichaves sa Jose Velarde bank account? Pati ang walang kamuwang-muwang na apo ay bitbit sa korte para suwerte. Kailangan nga niya iyon, dahil inihain na ang disbarment charges laban sa kanya.
2. **Si Flaminiano:** Walang ginawa kundi mag-object. Hindi pa tapos ang tanong, nag-o-object na. Ang dali naman ng kanyang trabaho. Magkano kaya ang kanyang suweldo?
3. **Ang Fortun Brothers:** Isang mahilig kumanta, isang nagmamalik-mata. Sarap na sarap sa "fifteen minutes of fame... or infamy." Kahit kapalit ay contempt of court.
4. **Si Daza:** Wala kaming ma-say, dahil wala siyang ma-say na may saysay. Nakakarinig ng mga sagot kahit hindi pa nabibigkas.
5. **Si Narvasa:** Mabango na sana ang pamana, nalublob pa ang dangal sa kangkungan.

Wala bang halaga ang katotohanan? Bakit pinipigilang tumestigo ang presidente? Dahil ba baka matapilok at madulas ang dila? Abangan...

ADVT.

Retired Cebu cop shot by ex-Ranger

CEBU CITY—A newly retired police official is in critical condition after an allegedly "insane" ex-Army Ranger shot him on Friday evening.

Retired Supt. Andres Sarmiento, 57, former chief of the Regional Internal Affairs Service (RIAS) and a former Cebu City police chief, suffered two gunshot wounds in his forehead and nose.

Sarmiento was operated on at the Cebu Doctors Hospital late Friday to remove a .22 cal. bullet embedded in his brain.

Sarmiento, who retired only two months ago, is known in Cebu as an honest and very religious police officer.

He would often be seen carrying a Bible instead of a gun.

Security was tightened around Sarmiento yesterday after his attacker, Oscar Jumamil, 37, a neighbor of the Sarmientos, went to the hospital yesterday morning.

Sarmiento's family believed Jumamil wanted to finish off the retired colonel.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Board orders Cagayan wage hike enforced

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Officials of the regional tripartite wages and productivity board (RTWPB) in Cagayan Valley ordered the full implementation of the region's new minimum wage rates until November.

Guerrero Cirilo, Department of Labor and Employment director and regional wage board chair, directed the strict implementation of these approved wage rates for the region's workers: For the non-agriculture sector, P180 a day for Isabela; P177, Cagayan; P173, Nueva Vizcaya; and P172, Quirino and Batanes.

For the agriculture sector, the approved wage rates are P168 for Isabela; P165, Cagayan; P161, Nueva Vizcaya; and P160, Quirino and Batanes.

Cirilo said the new wage rates apply to normal working hours and to all workers in the private sector regardless of position, designation, status and methods of hiring.

The order, however, would exclude domestic helpers and family drivers in the region.

In the Cordilleras, the P8-minimum wage increase implemented in the region may not sustain a family's daily cost of living as the poverty threshold income is expected to rise next year.

Teodoro Delson, Cordillera wage board director, said many sectors were dissatisfied with the new minimum wage increase.

Workers complained that the increase was too small, Delson said during the public hearings conducted in different Cordillera provinces by the board in October.

The increase was approved on Dec. 19 last year. The board said another P7 wage increase will be given to workers in the region on May 11, 2001.

Rodolfo Labarinto, an economist of the National Economic and Development Authority in the Cordilleras, said the economic crisis has caused an increase in the poverty threshold income of families in the region.

Although the number of poor families in the region dropped from 51 percent in 1994 to 42.5 percent in 1997 (based on the latest figures of the National Statistical Coordination Board), Labarinto said the poverty incidence in the region would increase next year.

NSCB records showed that the annual per capita poverty threshold in the region was P12,836 per individual or P64,180 per family with five members.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno-Cordillera, which has been calling for a P150-across-the-board minimum wage increase, said the approved rate for the region was not enough to sustain the needs of a family of five.

Lambert Addon, KMU-Cordillera secretary general, blamed President Estrada for the workers' plight. He said they could not demand an increase from employers "because the President is killing the economy."

"The closure of big companies is uncontrollable and Mr. Estrada is the reason for this. Had (Mr. Estrada) become sensitive to the people's call for him to resign, perhaps the economy can be improved and the workers can demand more increases," Addon told the INQUIRER. *Estanislao Caldez and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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INQUIRER
News that makes a difference.

Seaweed producers accuse competitor of 'killing' channel

BY DORIS BONGAC
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY— Local seaweed producers have asked Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Ouano to look into the alleged dumping of untreated wastewater in the Mactan Channel by one of their competitors.

Members of the Seaweed Industry Association of the Philippines (SIAP) led by Benson Dakay went to see Ouano last Thursday to convince him to act on alleged violation of the country's environmental laws of the FMC Marine Colloids.

FMC, which SIAP described as the "secret killer" of the Mactan Channel, is located at the Ouano Compound in the coastal village of Looc. It is a multinational seaweed processor, which exports about $4 billion worth of seaweed products annually.

Tita Tamayo, FMC managing director, declined to issue a statement on the allegation.

"We will not issue any comment," she said in a telephone interview.

Ouano assured SIAP members that the Total Environmental and Development Management Committee of the city government, which he heads, will immediately look into their complaint.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will also present to SIAP the results of its investigation on Jan. 15. The investigation would be conducted based on a letter-complaint earlier sent to the DENR by SIAP.

Dakay, who owns Shemberg Corp., the biggest seaweed processor in the country, claimed that the FMC has been throwing 1.5 million liters of toxic waste into the Mactan Channel daily.

The FMC, he claimed, is only able to treat about one-third of its total wastewater discharge. The remaining two-thirds is "secretly" disposed of in the Mactan Channel.

He said if untreated wastewater is discharged into the sea, it could cause skin diseases and other hazards. The intake of untreated wastewater could even lead to death, he added.

"(Ouano) has to send an audit team to determine if wastes are properly treated even in our companies," he said.

Dakay said toxic discharges into the Mactan Channel would prevent the growth of seaweed in nearby farms on Mactan Island, Bantayan Island, and Bohol.

He said 20 to 30 percent of their raw materials are taken from seaweed farms in the Visayas. The remaining 60 to 70 percent come from Mindanao.

Dakay said marine pollution could also hamper the growth of marine life and endanger the health of residents along the Mactan Channel, especially children.

"If it would not be stopped, the Mactan Channel will be totally hopeless," he warned.

Looc barangay captain Editha Cabahug admitted having received several complaints from residents of skin rashes caused by pollution at the Mactan Channel.

Cabahug, who joined the meeting between Ouano and the seaweed businessmen, said residents in her village first thought that the dumping of garbage into the sea caused the pollution.

She said it was only when the SIAP called her attention that she also started suspecting the FMC.

Dakay said he used to jetski on the Mactan Channel but he stopped when he started to itch with every fall into the water.

He claimed that the FMC is also extracting 400 million liters of water underground annually. He said the company maintains two deep wells inside their compound. But Dakay could not say if a permit covers the operation of these wells.

Elly Sagarino, a diver, said he was able to get chemical samples discharged from FMC pipes and had these tested at the Shemberg laboratory.

Sagarino said two pipes, about two to four inches wide, are submerged 30 to 40 feet in the sea and it is through these pipes that toxic wastes are discharged.

Because of their toxic content, the discharges cause "a very hot temperature and foul odor near the pipes."

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Sin: Keep up the good fight

(From page A1)

A conviction on any charge by two-thirds of the 22-member Senate would force Mr. Estrada from office.

"An acquittal is unacceptable. To acquit the President is to invite a repeat of Edsa (People Power)," said Robert Reyes, the running priest, who read the Kompil II statement.

But delegates to the Kompil II convention said Edsa II would not be confined to, or need not happen again, on Edsa, site of the People Power Revolution.

The "military component" of Edsa 1986, which led to the ouster of President Ferdinand Marcos, was not considered in the workshops, according to Kompil II speakers.

Former Defense Secretary Renato de Villa, who spoke on the security aspects of a post-acquittal scenario, said an Edsa-like mobilization "will happen even without substantial or active participation from the military or police" and even in the face of a "dispersal operation ordered by the Commander in Chief."

"The masses don't need the military for another Edsa," said Joel Rocamora, president of the party-list group Akbayan and executive secretary of the Institute for Popular Democracy.

In an earlier press conference, Reyes said the Catholic Church "will march in thousands and even in millions . . . if it becomes clear that the impeachment trial was reduced to a farce."

"This is when the senators would vote not based on evidence but based on what Malacañang expected of them," he said.

Cory's message

Last night, former President Corazon Aquino said the nation was bound to conclude that Mr. Estrada was guilty if he refused to take up her challenge to testify in his impeachment trial.

"If you have nothing to hide, if you have nothing to fear, testify in the court and face the Filipino people," Aquino told Mr. Estrada. "Don't hide behind your lawyers."

"If you refuse to take up this challenge, no acquittal verdict and any amount of image building toward reform can convince us of your innocence and you can't blame us if we will soon come to one conclusion, that you are guilty," she said in a message read by her son, Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III at the Kompil II convention.

Sin also sent a solidarity message, urging Kompil II to keep up the fight as he noted that the "whole truth is slowly being put together."

"This is not time to be passive and indifferent, not the time to just simply wait," he said.

For her part, Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo also urged Kompil II to continue with the fight as she warned that they all had "cause for concern" because those who "seek to preserve the spoils of power" were moving to "prevent the truth from coming out."

Macapagal said these people had vast resources to threaten and destroy the testimony and character of "credible and heroic" witnesses of the prosecution.

"We have cause for joy and hope," she said, because the people were able to discover that they have the power to create a just, free and provident society by demanding its public officials the "highest standard of integrity, competence, accountability and performance."

Conviction needed

Former National Security Adviser Jose Almonte urged senator-judges to listen to the opinion of civil society in handing down their verdict.

"The civil society has judged President Estrada to be morally unfit to rule . . . Since the impeachment is a political act, the Senate when it renders its own judgment must take into account this declared opinion of civil society," Almonte said.

He made the call in a speech over the weekend before members of the executive committee of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa (RAM), a group of military and police officers which launched several coup attempts against then President Aquino.

Almonte, a retired general, said the trial was not about the search for "incontestable proof of Estrada's wrongdoing" or about removing him as President and replacing him with Macapagal.

"This crisis is about making Philippine democracy work the way all of us hope it should. It is about stopping once and for all the collusion among politicians, bureaucrats and business oligarchs that has been making public policy and its enforcement for sale to the highest bidder," Almonte said.

JOAN BONDOC

OPPOSITION politicians and leaders of anti-Estrada groups attend Kompil II convention in Quezon City.

He said only a guilty verdict would restore civil society's confidence in our political institutions and return the country's political stability.

If ever the President is convicted, future Presidents will be compelled to live up to their oaths of office, according to Almonte.

"National society badly needs a conviction in this trial to assure itself it can make its fledgling democratic processes work," he said.

Honasan wrong

Rocamora and other Kompil II convenors rebutted Sen. Gringo Honasan's statement that a call for another "people power" revolt would not succeed today because the military would not support it.

Riza Hontiveros-Baraquel reminded Honasan that it was the masses "who saved the military when its attempt at power grab failed."

She accused Honasan of engaging in "historical revisionism."

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) also assailed Honasan for downplaying the "civilians' role" in the 1986 people power revolt.

Bayan said the Edsa uprising would not have happened had civilians not risked their lives to protect him and other military officers, including then Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos and Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile, who led a failed coup plot against Marcos.

Alvin Luque, Bayan-Davao City secretary general, said Honasan and other military officers would have been dead by now had civilians not rushed to Edsa to protect them.

"It was not a military-backed civilian uprising but rather it was the civilians who backed the military after Marcos discovered their plot to wrest power from him," Luque said.

Rodolfo Sambajon, chair of the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas or Pamalakaya said Honasan's view that the success of another "People Power" revolt was dependent on the military "lacked basis."

"Honasan should stop claiming credit for the success of the Edsa Revolt because the fall of the Marcos regime was the inevitable result of the people's struggle against the dictatorship," Sambajon said.

Poor student of history

"Despite years in civilian service, Honasan is still a poor student of history just like his mentor, Enrile," Sambajon said.

He said his group supported Sin's call on the people to take to the streets once the impeachment body decides in favor of the President.

The National Democratic Front yesterday said in an e-mailed statement that "the broad oust-Erap movement will surely welcome the plan of Cardinal Sin to launch a reprise of (the) Edsa revolution should President Estrada escape conviction from the ongoing impeachment trial."

Luis Jalandoni, NDF national executive committee member, said the planned demonstration today by the militant left "is already along that line."

"Acquittal is the death of democracy," Jalandoni said.

Clown show

At the Fiesta Carnival in Cubao, Quezon City, members of the militant youth group Anakbayan yesterday provided children a political entertainment as they staged a clown show mimicking senators whom they consider as "stooges" in the impeachment court.

Dressed as senator-clowns, nine Anakbayan members paraded around the carnival while holding balloons with the slogans: "We love Erap!" and "Acquit Erap!"

But much to the protesters' surprise, the slogans elicited negative reactions from some of the bystanders who apparently mistook them for a pro-Estrada group.

"*Bakit kayo* (why are you) pro-Erap?" a man asked.

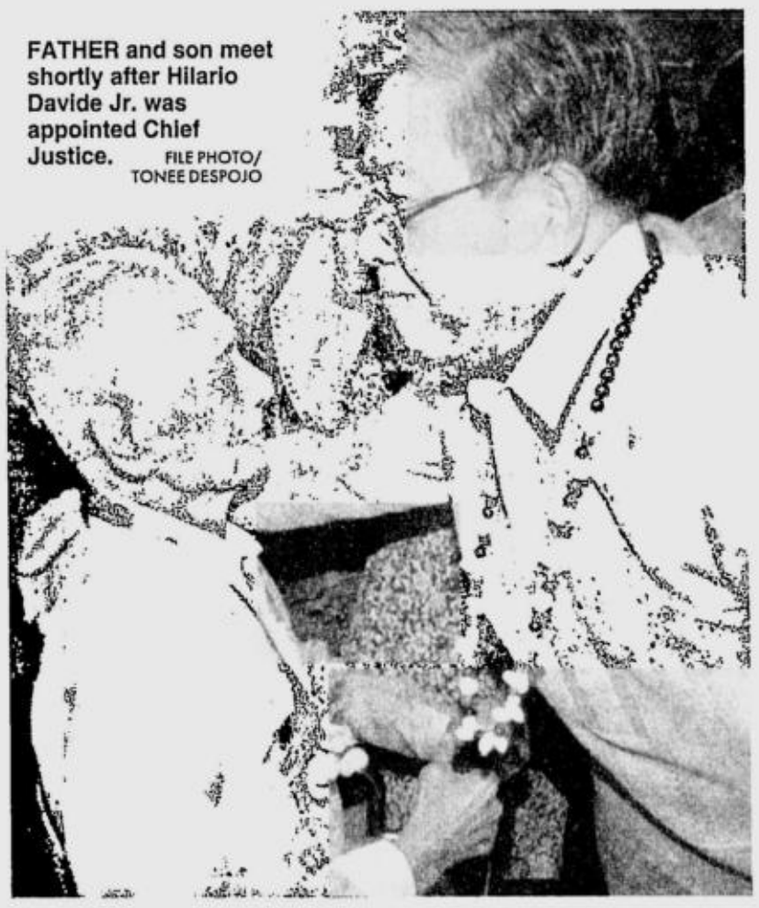
This prompted one of the activists to explain that the group was actually "mocking the circus that the Senate has become."

The senator-clowns, however, were identifiable only by their costumes: a straitjacket, heavy glasses, yellow blouse, flower and microphone, military pants, mustache, garlic necklace, basketball jersey and a *bayong*.

"These senators are rabid defenders of the President, as evident in the lack of impartiality they have displayed during the impeachment proceedings," said Eleonor de Guzman, Anakbayan vice chair.

De Guzman assailed the senators for allegedly trying to discredit the prosecution witnesses and their testimonies.

"But they must realize that they would be turning the whole impeachment trial into a joke once they vote for acquittal in any of the four Articles of Impeachment against President Estrada," she said. ***With reports from Agnes E. Donato in Manila; Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



FATHER and son meet shortly after Hilario Davide Jr. was appointed Chief Justice. FILE PHOTO/ TONEE DESPOJO

Dodong Jun makes father proud

(From page A1)

"*Si Papa moingon nga dili pa siya manihapon kay si Dodong Jun sa TV wa pa pod kapanihapon* (Papa says he does not want to eat yet because on TV, Dodong Jun has not yet eaten either)," she said.

That's how close father and son are.

Overnight visit

The Chief Justice took a break from his hectic schedule to come home on Saturday to be with his father, even for only one day. He returned to Manila yesterday morning, family members said.

Even before his father's birthday, Hilario Jr. always tried to come home to see his dad on weekends, Crisencia said.

Sounding like the retired public school superintendent that he is, Hilario Sr. told the INQUIRER: "I am very happy that our children have not given me problems but inspiration."

Jose said the whole Davide family felt "humbled" that his brother was chosen by the INQUIRER as the "living Filipino who made the most positive impact this past year on the life of the nation."

"My brother is very fair, something that our entire family is very proud of," Jose said.

No talk of trial

Since Saturday evening, the Davide clan has had a series of family parties to celebrate Hilario Sr.'s birthday.

When he left yesterday for Manila, the Chief Justice told his father to take good care of his health.

"Take good care of your health. You have to see Joey become an ordained priest," Crisencia quoted Hilario Jr. as telling his father before he left for Manila. Joey is Jose's son, a missionary in East Timor who is due to be ordained to the Jesuit order in 2005.

Crisencia said Hilario Jr. did not mention, even once, the President's impeachment trial during the family gathering.

She said this did not come as a surprise to the family. Even when he was just a practicing lawyer in Cebu, Davide never talked about the cases he was handling.

Jose said he also did not want to talk about the trial with his brother because Hilario Jr.'s visit to Cebu was purely a family matter.

But the entire Davide family never misses the trial on television, according to Jose.

Very lucid

Crisencia said that despite his age, Hilario Sr. remains very lucid, adding that his only problem is with his hearing.

He and his late wife Josefa have seven children, all of whom are professionals. Jose, 74, is a lawyer-engineer; Jorge, 72, a doctor who resides in the US state of Illinois; Maria Paz Aragon, 70, a retired teacher; Oscar, 69, a retired doctor of medicine. Romulo, 66, a doctor of pathology; Hilario Jr., 65, a former lawyer who rose from the ranks; and Lina, 57, a doctor of education who teaches at the Northern Illinois University.

The Chief Justice's mother died in 1996.

In the Davide hometown in Barangay Colawen, Argao, a party was also held in honor of Hilario Sr., who is the founder of the Colawen High School and other schools in the southern Cebu town.

Shared pride

The pride felt by the Davide family is shared by many Cebuanos.

Arthur Lim, national president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines who is also a Cebuano, said the Filipino people, especially the Cebuanos, "are very proud of the Chief Justice."

Lim said he would write Davide a congratulatory letter. He said he would also ask the Board of Governors of the IBP to pass a resolution congratulating Davide.

Ben Dapat, the president of the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, also said that Davide made him truly proud to be a Cebuano.

Davide was chosen "Filipino of the Year" in a vote of INQUIRER editors, assistant editors, and photo and research chiefs. He won by four votes out of 36 over Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson.

Estrada losing battle over public opinion

(From page A1)

ued to erode, even among the masses.

The Jan. 8 daily tracking poll was taken after the Dec. 22 testimony of Clarissa Ocampo, senior vice president of Equitable PCI Bank, who testified that she witnessed at close range the President sign a false name ("Jose Velarde") on documents pertaining to a P500-million trust account with the bank.

Her testimony is widely considered a major breakthrough for the prosecution, and a turning point in the trial of the President who is accused of bribery, corruption, betrayal of public trust, and culpable violation of the Constitution.

The poll, however, was taken before the devastating testimonies last week of former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu; Perfecto Yasay Jr., former chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission; Jose Luis "Nonoy" Yulo, former president of the Philippine Stock Exchange; and Ruben Almadro, former head of the PSE's Compliance and Surveillance Group.

Espiritu's testimony exploded a bombshell whose repercussions could only damage further the President's trust or approval ratings in new poll findings to be released by Pulse Asia and the Social Weather Stations sometime this week.

On the stand

Espiritu, who resigned from the Cabinet in January 2000, testified that the President had gained big profits in the insider trading of stocks of BW Resources Corp., controlled by the President's friend Dante Tan. He described how the President intervened to favor the interests of Dante Tan and another crony, Lucio Tan, in their transactions with the formerly state-controlled Philippine National Bank.

Yasay and Yulo testified to the intervention by the President in the PSE's investigation into the charges of insider trading and manipulation of stocks of BW Resources. The President was portrayed as putting pressure on the SEC and the PSE to clear Dante Tan of the charges.

Almadro described how the manipulation was done.

Another indication

Another indication of the damaging impact of the trial is the SWS survey conducted on Dec. 23—a day after the Clarissa Ocampo bombshell exploded, which found that 41-46 percent of 500 Metro Manila respondents believed the President was guilty of the four articles of impeachment.

The survey found that 44 percent believed that he accepted bribes from "jueteng" money, with only 24 percent believing he was "not guilty."

Forty-two percent found him "guilty" of amassing wealth to finance homes for his mistresses, while 26 percent believed he was "not guilty."

Forty-six percent believed he awarded "special favors, such as contracts, to his family or friends," and 22 percent said he was "not guilty" of these charges.

Forty-one percent said he was "guilty" of violating the Constitution, and 28 percent believed he was "not guilty."

The SWS findings, as well as those of Pulse Asia, suggest that because of the fountain of information springing from the trial, the number of undecided Filipinos is shrinking, a trend that feeds the number of people who are losing trust in the President or becoming dissatisfied with his performance.

Access to information

The preponderance of pro-Estrada reports and commentaries, especially over the AM radio stations, has failed to counter the gradual but steady erosion of the President's popularity. The findings seem to argue that the live radio and TV coverage of the impeachment trial is giving the people enough information to enable them to make independent judgments and to reject government propaganda.

In its fourth-quarter survey (Dec. 8-17, 2000), whose cut-off was only 10 days after the start of the trial on Dec. 7, the SWS already found that the President's net satisfaction rating nationwide had declined to plus 9 percent from plus 19 percent in late September and early October.

The third-quarter survey was taken after Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson exploded his bombshell, accusing the President of taking bribes in jueteng money and in tobacco excise taxes. Since that survey, the President's popularity has dived.

A separate SWS/ABS-CBN survey taken on Dec. 8-11 nationwide found that 50 percent of the respondents had not made up their minds, saying they didn't know enough. But it is likely that with the public's access to information on the trial, this undecided mass has shrunk.

Wishful thinking

The expected shrinkage and the demonstrated plunge in the President's trust/approval/satisfaction ratings indicate the buildup of a constituency that can fuel unrest over an acquittal decision by the impeachment tribunal.

It would be the height of complacency and wishful thinking for the President's apologists to expect the reversal of the trend when the defense argues its case in the next four weeks.

While it may be true that the prosecution has been clumsy in presenting its case, its relative weakness has been more than compensated for by its strong evidence and credible and authoritative witnesses, including Ocampo, Espiritu, Yulo, Yasay and Almadro.

Developments in the trial and public reaction to them, as reflected in the polls, will signal if a bandwagon for conviction is developing in public opinion. The bandwagon phenomenon is the key to whether the hard core of Estrada supporters in the Senate will crumble.

The senator-judges' antenna had better be sensitive to the warning rumblings of an anti-Estrada public opinion landslide.

Prosecution keen on 'mother account'

(From page A1)

however, faces a tough fight before the envelope is opened. The President's defense lawyers are expected to object strongly to the opening of the documents on grounds that these are immaterial and irrelevant to the Articles of Impeachment.

The impeachment court is expected to rule on the issue either today or tomorrow after both sides shall have presented the oral and written arguments.

A member of the 11-man House prosecution panel yesterday said the documents would show that the President maintained hefty Equitable PCI Bank accounts using the alias "Jose Velarde."

"The documents will show how the funds came in and we will be able to prove that the money is ill-gotten, undeclared and unexplained. Those documents contain checks and cashier checks and we will be able to trace the sources," said the prosecutor who declined to be identified.

He said the P1.2-billion mother account was the source of the P142-million "Jose Velarde" check that was used to purchase the so-called "Boracay mansion" for one of the President's mistresses.

The court earlier opened a sealed envelope containing documents related to the check that was drawn from the Equitable PCI Bank branch in Binondo, Manila.

The prosecutor added that the same mother account funded the P500-million trust account that the President used in an investment management agreement with Equitable PCI Bank.

Clarissa G. Ocampo, an Equitable PCI Bank senior vice president, earlier testified that she saw the President affix the signature "Jose Velarde" on bank documents relating to the P500-million trust account.

Manuel Curato, the bank's legal officer, later corroborated her testimony.

Prosecutors want the second sealed envelope opened as soon as possible to allow them to seek subpoenas for related bank documents.

Otherwise, prosecutors fear, they may not be able to finish its presentation of evidence by Jan. 19, the deadline imposed by the impeachment court.

The prosecution earlier argued that the second Article of Impeachment (graft and corruption) was "wide-ranging that included unexplained wealth."

The defense, however, contended the bank accounts were irrelevant as these were not mentioned in any of the annexes of the Articles of Impeachment.

More pressure

Even so, prosecutors on Sunday said the testimony of former Finance Secretary Edgardo Espiritu was enough to ensure a conviction and put more pressure on the President to take the witness stand.

Marinduque Rep. Edmundo Reyes Jr., spokesperson of the prosecution panel, said Mr. Estrada would be "convicted hands down" if he failed to refute charges made by Espiritu.

Espiritu, who fled Saturday to the United States after receiving death threats, last week testified that Mr. Estrada had indicated to him that he was part-owner of BW Resources Corp., a firm at the center of the country's biggest stock manipulation scandal.

ESPIRITU

Espiritu said the President had told him that he made a lot of money through his businessman-friend Dante Tan, majority owner of BW Resources.

The prosecution called Espiritu to the stand to prove its charge that the President intervened on Tan's behalf in investigations involving BW Resources Corp.

Former Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Perfecto Yasay Jr. and two former officials of the Philippine Stock Exchange also testified that the President pressured them into clearing Tan.

Their testimony was the linchpin of the prosecution's charge that the President betrayed public trust, the third Article of Impeachment.

In his testimony, Espiritu also told the court that Mr. Estrada associated with notorious smugglers at Malacañang and urged the Philippine National Bank to approve a P600-million loan to BW Resources even if the gaming firm was losing a lot of money then.

Espiritu said he left the Cabinet last year because he could not stand the rampant corruption that resulted in huge budget deficits.

"The impact of Espiritu's testimony is huge. It puts the pressure on President Estrada to take the witness stand," Reyes told AFP.

"So no doubt, if he wants to stand a chance of being acquitted he should take the witness stand since no one else can deny Espiritu's statement."

Mr. Estrada's lawyers, as well as Palace officials, have downplayed Espiritu's testimony and have maintained it had not dented the defense. They also waived cross-examination of Espiritu.

Espiritu had also said Mr. Estrada's friends, including Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara, tried to pressure him into not testifying.

Reyes said public perception had now turned against Mr. Estrada after one of his mistresses left the country to evade testifying against the former movie action star.

Ex-movie starlet Laarni Enriquez took an abrupt flight to the United States via Hong Kong on Thursday, a day after Senate officials were reprimanded when they tried to personally give her a subpoena.

Senators sitting as judges in the trial have said a verdict should be handed down by Feb. 12, although political commentators have expressed fears that the tribunal would not be able to muster the two-thirds vote necessary to convict the leader. *With a report from AFP*

CORRECTION

In the Page 1 banner story, "Espiritu leaves for US," of the Jan. 14 issue, the sixth paragraph should read: "Mr. Espiritu is leaving to secure himself and his family **from persons** who want him dead because of the damaging testimony he has given in the Senate," he added.

Equitable PCI Bank for sale

(From page A1)

The rest of the bank's equity is held by the Romualdez family, Equitable Investments Inc. and the investing public.

Buenaventura

Rafael Buenaventura, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas governor, said he had heard of the plan to sell the bank but added he had not received any "solid information."

"If it were true, then this would result in a further consolidation in the banking industry that would allow the buyer to become a regional player," Buenaventura told the INQUIRER.

After buying Far East Bank in 1999, BPI of the Ayala group became the country's largest bank with assets of more than P310 billion and a deposit base of about P240 billion.

Metrobank is the country's second largest bank with assets of about P300 billion and deposits of more than P231 billion. George Ty, Metrobank chair, is also a close associate of the President.

RCBC of the Yuchengco family ranks ninth with assets of a little less than P110 billion and deposits of about P77 billion.

To stop the withdrawals, Equitable PCI Bank has been very cooperative in the impeachment trial, submitting subpoenaed documents and allowing its officers to testify.

Clarissa G. Ocampo, an Equitable PCI Bank senior vice president, for instance, testified that she saw the President affix the signature "Jose Velarde" on bank documents relating to a P500-million trust account.

Manuel Curato, the bank's legal officer, also took the witness stand and corroborated Ocampo's testimony.

House prosecutors in the Senate trial have also discovered a P140-million check with the "Jose Velarde" signature that was used to acquire the so-called "Boracay mansion" for one of the President's mistresses.

Prosecutors have said the documents and the testimony of the witnesses proved that the President acquired ill-gotten wealth to finance a lavish lifestyle for himself and his mistresses.

The President has denied all the allegations.

At the same time, however, he has accused Equitable PCI Bank of conspiring with opposition groups in plotting his ouster.

Businessman Ricardo Romulo, who replaced Go as Equitable PCI Bank chair, also heads the Makati Business Club that is at the forefront of the campaign calling for the President's resignation.

Romulo has brushed aside the President's charges.

Rumors persist

Still, rumors persist that Equitable PCI is about to declare a bank holiday.

Buenaventura, however, said there was "absolutely no truth to vicious text messages that circulated Friday that the bank would either declare a bank holiday or would be shut down by the Monetary Board."

"Up to now, the bank has not come to us for any liquidity assistance," he pointed out.

Sources said the bank had been using its secondary reserves and selling its government securities to cope with the withdrawals.

Wilfrido Vergara, Equitable PCI Bank president, said the bank's fundamentals remained sound.

Go left the country last week to seek medical treatment abroad in the face of what he claimed were threats to his life.

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Rookies game lineup known

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

THE CAST for the 2001 Schick Rookie Challenge to be held at the MCI Center in Washington, DC as part of the NBA All-Star Saturday program on Feb. 10 (Feb. 11, Manila time) has been finalized.

For the second consecutive year, the game will feature the best of the rookies against the best of the sophomores. The 1999 event was cancelled as a result of a protracted lockout, thereby depriving that year's freshman class from participation, and spurred the league to alter the previous format of an East-West matchup involving 16 first-year players from both conferences under the then-called Schick Rookie Game that made its debut in 1994 following the demise of the Schick Legends Classic which featured old-time greats.

Making up the Rookie Team are New Jersey forward-center Kenyon Martin (6-10, the No. 1 overall pick in the 2000 draft), LA Clippers forward Darius Miles (6-9, No. 3), Orlando forward Mike Miller (6-8, No. 5), Detroit guard Mateen Cleaves (6-2, No. 14), LA Clippers guard Quentin Richardson (6-6, No. 18), Toronto forward Morris Peterson (6-7, No. 21) Chicago guard Khalid El-Amin (5-10, No. 34—second round), Golden State center-forward Marc Jackson (6-10, 1997 second-round pick by Phoenix).

Composing the Sophomore Team are Chicago forward Elton Brand (6-8), Charlotte guard Baron Davis (6-3), Houston guard Steve Francis (6-3), Washington swingman Richard Hamilton (6-7), Phoenix forward Shawn Marion (6-7), Cleveland guard Andre Miller (6-2), LA Clippers forward Lamar Odom (6-10), Minnesota forward Wally Szczerbiak (6-7) and Atlanta guard Jason Terry (6-2).

Coaches of the nine-man units will soon be announced.

Note that the Sophomore are top heavy at the point guard position and do not have a legit center. Missing from the Rookies lineup is Chicago forward Marcus Fizer (6-8), who ranks among the NBA's top 10 rookie scorers.

A year ago, Brand earn MVP honors in the Schick Rookie Challenge after collecting 16 points and an event-record 21 rebounds in leading the Rookies to a 92-83 upset of the Sophomores. Other members of that Rookie Team included Odom, Szecerbiak, Miller and Francis, who shared the NBA Rookie of the Year award with Brand last campaign.

The Schick Rookie Challenge will be played in two 20-minute halves. In case of a deadlock at the end of regulation, there will be a two-minute extension to determin the winner.

Any rookie or second-year player in the All-Star Saturday event who is later selected to play in the regular NBA All-Star Game on Feb. 11 (Feb. 12, Manila time) will be substituted by another player.

The single-game scoring record in the Rookie Challenge belongs to the LA Lakers' Kobe Bryant, who as an 18-year-old out of prep school tallied 31 points in a losing cause in the 1997 event in Cleveland.

Previous MVP winners in the event are Orlando's Anfernee Hardaway (1994, now with Phoenix), the Lakers' Eddie Jones (1995, now with Miami), Toronto's Damon Stoudamire (1996, now with Portland), Philadelphia's Allen Iverson (1997), Cleveland's Zydrunas Ilgauskas and Brand.

Venus is player to beat in Open

MELBOURNE, Australia—A familiar pose best captures women's tennis today: Venus Williams at the net, racket cocked, ready to slam an overhead, a picture of aggression, intimidation and domination.

The striking image serves as a symbol at the start of the new year, with Williams poised to overpower her sport. All she has to do is follow through.

It's not that easy, of course. The Australian Open begins today with Williams' formidable rivals on hand—sister Serena, defending champion Lindsay Davenport and three-time champ Martina Hingis. And doubts about Venus Williams' durability and devotion to tennis persist, leading skeptics to wonder how long she can dominate the WTA Tour.

But there's no question she reached a rarefied level last year. Despite sitting out the first four months with tendinitis in both wrists, she won 35 consecutive matches and six consecutive tournaments.

While the third-seeded Williams is the player to beat in the women's draw, there's no clear favorite among the men. Gustavo Kuerten is top-seeded after finishing 2000 ranked No. 1, but two-time champion Pete Sampras is the choice of oddsmakers.

Other threats include defending champ Andre Agassi, Australian Lleyton Hewitt and Yevgeny Kafelnikov, who always seems to play well Down Under. *AP*

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: Australian Open, Elimination Round at 7:30 a.m. - 10 p.m. (r - 10 p.m. - 7:30 a.m.) on Sky Cable 17

ATP World Series Tournament - Qatar Open 2001, Semifinal #1 at 12:30 p.m., Semifinal #2 at 2:30 p.m. on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Memphis Tigers vs De Paul Blue Demons at 4 p.m. (r) on ESPN

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Super Bowl Highlights XXI - Denver Broncos vs New York Giants at 4 p.m. (r) on ESPN

NFL Playoffs, AFC Championships – Baltimore Ravens vs Oakland Raiders at 10 p.m. (delayed) on ESPN

GOLF: Nedbank Golf Challenge 2000, Day One at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

SWIMMING: World Cup (Canada) Highlights at midnight (r) on Star Sports

SOCCER: Asian Football Show at 6:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports and at 9 a.m. (r) on ESPN

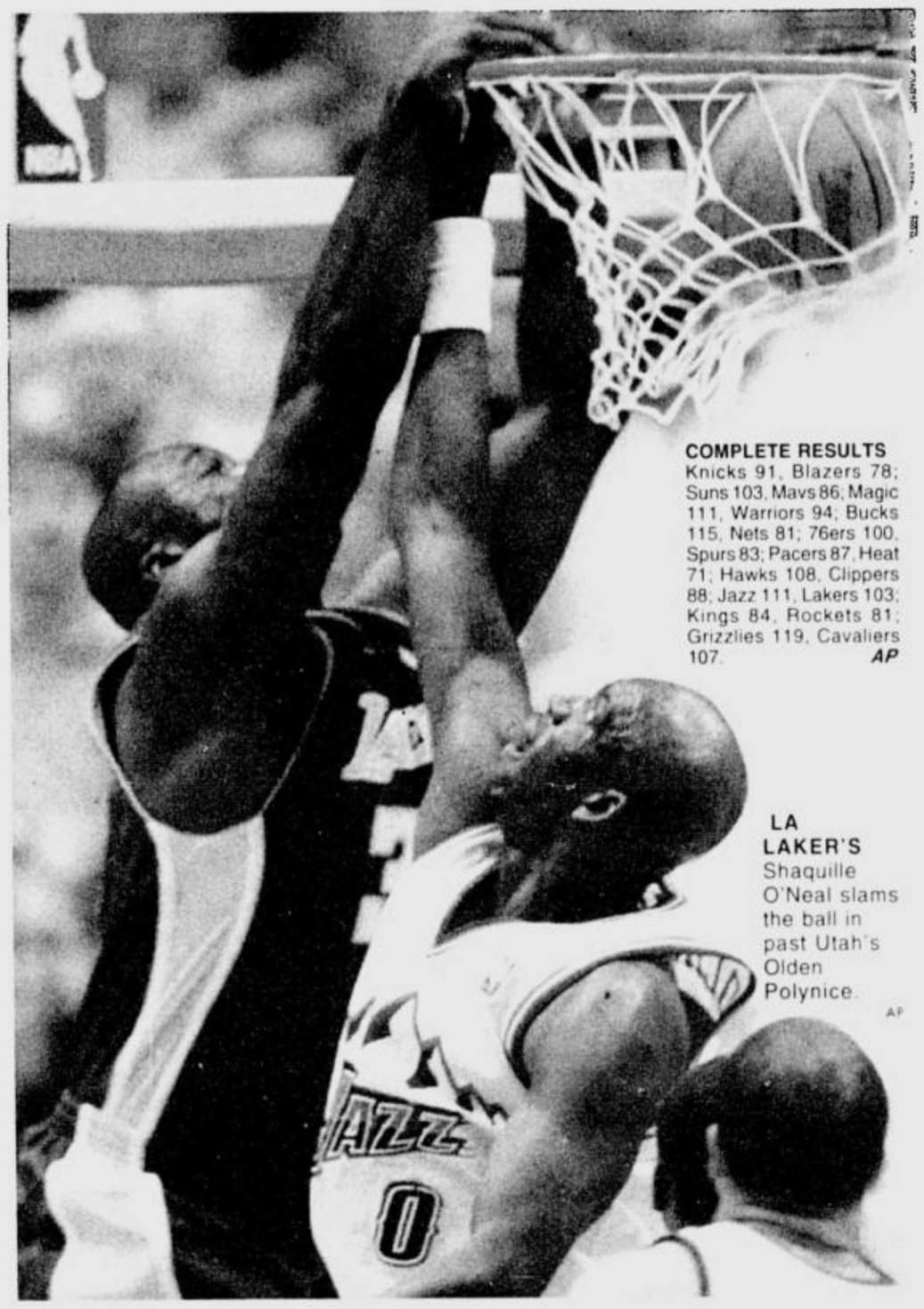
Spanish Football League at 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. (r) on ESPN

Italian Serie A 2000/2001 Highlights at 7 p.m. on ESPN

BOWLING: CGU Asian Bowling Tour 2000 – Grand Slam Finals, Round 2 at 10 a.m. (r) on ESPN

NBA ROUNDUP

Knicks end Blazers run



COMPLETE RESULTS
Knicks 91, Blazers 78; Suns 103, Mavs 86; Magic 111, Warriors 94; Bucks 115, Nets 81; 76ers 100, Spurs 83; Pacers 87, Heat 71; Hawks 108, Clippers 88; Jazz 111, Lakers 103; Kings 84, Rockets 81; Grizzlies 119, Cavaliers 107. *AP*

LA LAKER'S Shaquille O'Neal slams the ball in past Utah's Olden Polynice. AP

NEW YORK—Marcus Camby had 16 points and 15 rebounds and Charlie Ward scored a season-high 17 points as New York ended Portland's 10-game winning streak after a 91-78 victory in the NBA Saturday night.

The Knicks held the Trail Blazers to their second-lowest point total of the season in handing them their first loss since Dec. 22. They also held their opponent under 100 points for the 30th consecutive game, extending their NBA record.

Allan Houston and Latrell Sprewell added 12 points apiece as seven players scored in double figures for New York.

Suns 103, Mavs 86

In Dallas, Cliff Robinson scored 11 of his 21 points in the decisive third quarter and Shawn Marion had 23 points and 11 rebounds, leading the Phoenix Suns past the sloppy Dallas Mavericks.

Jason Kidd added 15 points and 11 assists Saturday for the Suns, who won for the fourth time in five games.

Michael Finley had 27 points and six assists for the Mavericks, who committed 23 turnovers and lost their second straight.

Dallas was missing point guard Steve Nash. Dirk Nowitzki, the Mavericks' leading scorer, played through a stomach flu and finished with 15 points and 12 rebounds.

Magic 111, Warriors 94

In Orlando, Florida, Tracy McGrady scored 27 points in 22 minutes and reserve Pat Garrity scored 17 as Orlando beat Golden State for the 10th time in 13 games.

Darrell Armstrong had 11 points and nine assists and Monty Williams added 14 points and eight rebounds for the Magic, who converted 17 Golden State turnovers into 19 points.

Bucks 115, Nets 81

In Milwaukee, Glenn Robinson scored a season-high 35 points in 35 minutes and Milwaukee extended its home winning streak to nine games.

The 34-point margin matched Milwaukee's biggest victory this season, a 104-70 rout of Chicago on Jan. 2.

Sam Cassell added 16 points and 13 assists for the Bucks, who haven't lost at home Dec. 7. The Nets lost for the 10th time in 12 games and for the 22nd time in 27 games.

Stephen Jackson scored 18 points for the Nets.

76ers 100, Spurs 83

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson scored 25 of his 40 points in the first half and Toni Kukoc added 17 as Philadelphia won for the ninth time in 10 games and improved the NBA's best record to 27-9.

Tim Duncan scored 29 points and Derek Anderson added 23 for the Spurs, who had a five-game winning streak halted.

Pacers 87, Heat 71

In Indianapolis, Jalen Rose scored 21 points as Indiana pulled away in a foul-filled fourth quarter.

Jermaine O'Neal added 18 points and Reggie Miller finished with 12 for the Pacers, who snapped a two-game losing streak.

Anthony Mason matched his season high with 24 points for the Heat, and Tim Hardaway scored 13 of his 20 points in the third quarter.

Jazz 111, Lakers 103

In Salt Lake City, John Starks and John Stockton each scored 21 points and Karl Malone had 20 as Utah prevailed in a Western Conference showdown.

Donyell Marshall scored 18 points in his third straight start for the Jazz, who maintained a 10-point lead through much of the last 20 minutes and held off the Lakers down the stretch. *AP*

Hawks retire No. 21

ATLANTA—For Dominique Wilkins, the retirement of No. 21 underlines a hard truth.

"Now, it's official," said the man known as "The Human Highlight Film" during his 15-year NBA career. "I'm actually retired. I can't fake it anymore like I'm actually going to come back for one more year."

Wilkins, who turned 41 Friday, was to be honored Saturday night by the team where he spent most of his high-flying career. The Atlanta Hawks planned to retire his number, raising it to the rafters of Philips Arena alongside those of Bob Pettit (9) and Lou Hudson (23).

Els' compatriot seizes control

Sabbatini cards 65, gains 2-shot edge

KAPALUA, Hawaii—A South African is in control of the Mercedes Championships, just not the player anyone expected.

Rory Sabbatini holed a wedge shot for eagle on No. 16, part of a four-shot swing over two holes that enabled him to blow past Ernie Els on Saturday on the way to an 8-under 65.

Vijay Singh was second, two strokes back, after a 67. The Masters champ birdied the last four holes, including a 12-footer (3.6-meter putt) on the last after hitting his approach against the bleachers.

"It was one of those days where everything seems to go your way," Sabbatini said.

That wasn't the case for Tiger Woods, who was eight strokes back at 211 after a 68.

The defending champion missed eight putts inside 15 feet (4.5 meters) and was so frustrated that he jokingly muttered to caddie Steve Williams at one point, "You think I should try crosshanded?"

But the real frustration belonged to Els.

Determined to start his season off on a winning note, Els had the tournament under control until he collapsed on the par 5s on the back nine of the Plantation Course at Kapalua, twice having to take penalty drops because of errant tee shots.

When he missed a 3-foot (one meter) bogey putt on the final hole, Els had an even-par 73 on a surprisingly calm day in Maui, a day in which none of the 33 players in the winners-only field were over par.

While the harsh grain of Hawaiian greens requires lots of course knowledge, the 24-year-old Sabbatini is making the most of his first visit to Kapalua.

He had a 16-under 203 total.

With his double bogey on the final hole, Els was at 12-under 207. After taking a four-stroke cushion into the weekend, the Big Easy has his work cut out for him.

But it's not impossible.

Several players went low and put themselves into position to make a run, including David Duval, who matched Sabbatini with a 65 for the low round of the tournament. Duval, the '99 Mercedes champion, was six strokes back.

Jim Furyk had this third straight 4-under 69 and was tied with Els, four strokes back.

The group at 208 included Paul Azinger, who was within two strokes of the lead at one point until hitting into the hazard on No. 15 and taking double bogey.

SABBATINI waves his hat to the crowd after parring the 18th hole. AP

Giants battle Vikings

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Lawrence Taylor reminded the New York Giants on Saturday to do whatever it takes to beat the Minnesota Vikings and get to the Super Bowl.

"You've got what you want right here," Taylor said in capping a five-minute speech that kept players riveted on every word. "You can't ask for anything better than this: playing this game, you're 60 minutes away, here at Giants Stadium.

"It can't be any better than that," the Hall of Fame linebacker added. "From the bottom of my heart, we're proud of you, and whatever it takes: get it done."

Taylor's speech ended an emotional final workout on the eve of the conference championship between the Giants (13-4) and Vikings (12-5). *AP*

RP Int'l jungolf tilt today at Wack-Wack

THE OPENING ceremony of the fourth PLDT Philippine International Junior Golf Championships will be held at 4:30 p.m. today at the grounds of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City.

Ben Abalos, the Wack Wack President and former Mandaluyong City mayor will be the guest speaker. Noted sportscaster Ed Picson will be the master of ceremonies.

Except for Indonesia, all the participating countries have arrived for the tournament starting tomorrow (Tues. Jan. 16) at the world famous East Course.

The players already in town are from the United States, People's Republic of China, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Guam, Sarawak, Sabah, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea.

All participants are transported by Morelia Tours and Travel, the tournament's official transport provider.

"The Indonesians are arriving today in time for the opening ceremonies," Edgardo "Tito Boy" Cantada, president of the organizing Philippine Junior Golf Federation.

"And I would like to thank Tessie Oben for providing local transportation for all the participants for the past three years."

Roligon derby

WITH THE list of participants coming from different parts of the world, the forthcoming "P10 Million Roligon 11th Grand Anniversary 7-Cock Derby" set to blast-off tomorrow has become a prestigious international event in the offing.

Noted Texan James Pope, one of the world's most popular game-fowl breeders, will be fighting his yellow-legged Sweaters and Kelso-Roundhead crosses in partnership with airline pilot Chet Cuneta, brother of megastar Sharon Cuneta.

Guam-based Sedfrey Linsangan and 35 "balikbayan-sabungeros" will also see action.

"With our count, the P10-million derby will present the biggest number of foreign participants ever. We are looking at 20 to 30," stated RMC's general manager Rolando S. Luzong.

The cocker to watch

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE MAN from Georgia, 62-year-old Roger Roberts, is the cocker to watch in the World Slasher 8-Cock Derby which starts today at the Araneta Coliseum.

An electric engineer from Atlanta, Roberts will be bringing with him a full complement of battle-ready "Hatchets" to spearhead his maiden campaign in this widely accepted "Olympics of Cockfighting."

"You watch out for Roberts," said dapper Nene Araneta, owner of the Big Dome, during an interview last Saturday. "He is the man to beat."

Roberts is not a first-timer in the Philippines. He has served for a few months at Clark Field and Subic Bay as a member of the United States Marine Corps in 1963, but this will mark the first that he will be competing at the Big Dome, considered as the "world's toughest pit."

"I'm looking forward to face this daunting challenge," said Roberts, adding that he was dared to come here by fellow American cocker-breeders such as Ray Alexander, Gene Brown, Tom Cooper and Jeff Hudspeth.

"I meet them at the pit at least once a month and, together with my friend Johnny Philips, we cross paths in leading American derbies like Sunset and Bayou in Louisiana," said Roberts. "Actually, we were ready to compete here as early as last year. I remember we were already at the airport on our way to Manila, but Delta Airlines would not take the "Hatchets" on board for fear of "raw hot" weather. This time, we're rarin' to go. We've prepared long for this challenge."

The "Hatchets" are a cross between the Hatch Roundheads, and the Chet Roundheads which Roberts and his family have been breeding for the last 20 years in his game farm in Winder, about 30 kilometers north of Atlanta. Originally bred by the renowned Chet Robinson as far back as 30 years ago, the Chets have proven their worth as "tough and bull-strong." Crossed with the Hatch, the resultant "Hatchets" have given Roberts several stirring victories in the US circuit, including six derby championships at Sunset in 1996.

"We come here to win," said Roberts, "but knowing the caliber of the entries at the Big Dome, we know the odds are forbidding for my "Hatchets." But we are ready. That's for sure."

Today's opening salvo will be two-cock matches, followed by another two-cock elimination fights on Wednesday, Jan. 17, culminating with the crucial four-cock finals on Friday, Jan. 19. The blue-ribbon affair will be hosted by Nene Araneta, Ito Ynares and the Firefly Group.

* * *

ROLL OF HONOR. Jun Santiago of Firefly fame and Vic Amanate of Fantastic won the first World Slasher championship, scoring six points each, in 1990. In January 1991, Cito Alberto, using the entry name C.A. Villamor, emerged solo champion with seven points while in May 1991, four entries shared the championship, namely William Co (Botchocoy), Peping Cojuangco, Esting Teopaco and Bob Howard (Bob & Sting), Manny Dalipe (Red Ball I) and Boy Primallion (BPZ). Joey de los Santos (Serpentina), Polding Correa (LL Bulldozer) and Jun Santiago (Firefly) dominated the star-studded field in 1992 while Peping Ricafort (PTK Country Road) and Peping Cojuangco, Esting Teopaco and Bob Howard (Bob & Joe) topped 'em in 1993. In 1994 Biboy Enriquez teamed up with Oscar Akins (Bullrun Firebirds III) to win top honors together with Jun Santiago and Dan Gray (Dan Gray Firefly) and the formidable Nene Araneta-Ray Alexander tandem (Stingray).

In 1995 the Araneta-Alexander combine and Buddy Mann, using the entry name Thunderbird, retained the World Slasher silver cup made in Italy, sharing the crown with Mario Villamor, Nene Abello and the legendary Carol NeSmith (Two Raffy's Blackwater) and the Cojuangco-Teopaco-Howard trio (Bob & Joe). Later in 1995, Dante Carandand, Boy de Roca and Rio Salceda (Tanauan Aces) made the elite list, finishing as solo champion. *(To be continued).*

Red Bull gets ...

(From page A24)

Mobiline used its second first-round pick for MBAer Norman Gonzales, while Sta. Lucia Realty and Purefoods snagged PBL stars Marvin Ortiguerra and Roger Yap, respectively.

Last year's back-to-back champion San Miguel Beer appeared to be picking on a whim, shocking everybody by calling in unheralded 5-foot-11 guard Joey Mente.

Tanduay didn't get to pick until the second round but immediately get into shopping frenzy, making at least four on-the-spot trades to get nine players from the pool.

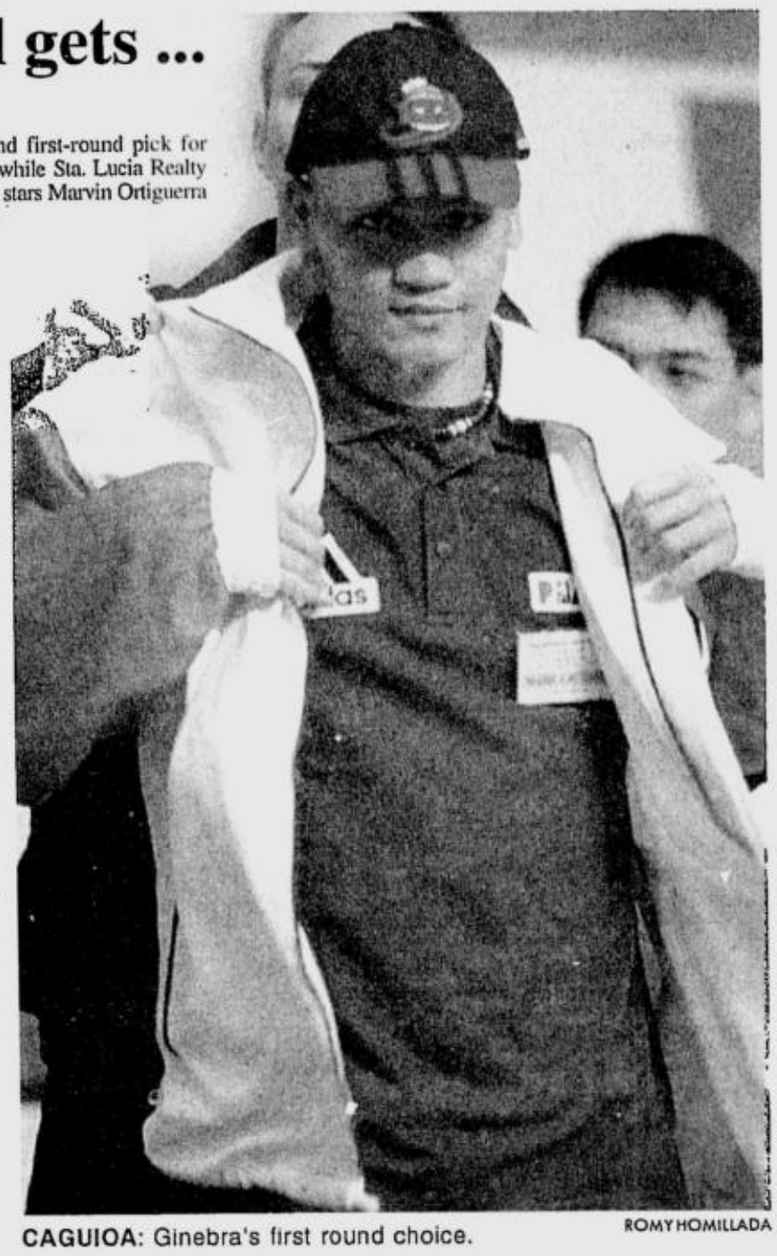
Raring to build an entirely new team, the Rhummasters netted big men Oliver Agapito, Recaredo Calimag, Charles de Jesus, Joseph Allan Salangsang, Dominic Uy and Maoi Roca aside from getting Jay Magat, David Matthew Friedof and Michael Robinson.

In the second round, the Aces picked another Fil-Am, Kenny Evans, who was welcomed by fellow half-breed players Jon Ordonio, James Wallkvist, Ali Peek and Arigo.

Shell ceded its second-round rights to Tanduay in favor of a future draft pick, apparently contented with Hrabak who arrived Saturday night but has yet to be seen by Ronquillo.

"They said you can't teach height," said Ronquillo. "It's a big gamble on our part because we haven't seen him in person, let alone play. But we are talking of a 6-foot-7 player who can provide height for us."

The Beermen again went for a guard in Jomar Tierra apparently in preparation for the possible departure of Boybits Victoria before taking in 6-foot-2 Fil-Am Jeremy Aniciete and guard Calijohn Orfrecio.



CAGUIOA: Ginebra's first round choice. ROMY HOMILLADA

P1M up for grabs in Baguio

THE SEARCH for the next million-peso winner in the Rotary golfing calendar will continue in Baguio City where the 15th Rotary Golfing Fellowship Foundation of the Philippines tournament will be held from Feb. 8-10.

For the last 14 years, Seaboard Eastern Insurance through its president Jose Halili-Co has been putting up the P1 million prize for a hole-in-one in RGFFP-conducted events.

Nonoy Braga, tournament chair of RGFFP, said that the bigtime hole-in-one tradition will continue and hopefully, somebody hits the jackpot this time.

Only five aces have been recorded so far in the RGFFP series.

The elite club of acemakers includes Douglas Yu of RC Univ. District (1987), Dwight Penson of RC-Las Piñas (1991), Bernie Jambalos of RC-Panday Pira (1992), Victor Villarosa of RC-Bacolod Marapara (1996) and Renato Magadia of RC-Makati North (1997).

RP golfers make cut

DOROTHY Delasin and Jennifer Rosales barely made the qualifying cut after contrasting rounds yesterday in the YourLife Vitamins LPGA Classic at the Grand Cypress Resort course in Orlando, Florida.

Delasin, last year's top rookie, played a lot better than her disappointing start of 76, carding a 71 to earn a tie for 58th with a 147 aggregate.

It was the opposite for Rosales who failed to keep up her brilliant effort of 70 as she soared to a 78 for 148 and was in the last group of players which made the cut at 66th spot.

Carin Koch fired a 68 to snatch a one-stroke lead over Laura Davies (72) with a 137 total.

Delasin had three birdies for the day against two bogeys while Rosales took seven bogeys and made just one birdie.

Jong Arcano

Wack Wack's B. Shaw meet slated Jan. 26-27

A DREAM vacation in exclusive Amanpulo, Northwest tickets to the US and Omega watches make up the main prizes of the Bill Shaw Memorial Golf Classic, the annual member-guest tourney of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club set Jan. 26-27

The three-day, two-night trip to Amanpulo, consistently voted as the world's best beach resort, plus the other prizes from Northwest, Omega and other sponsors will be raffled off during the awards rites on Saturday, Jan. 27.

A separate prize package is in store for the overall winning pair, the gross and net champions and the top three finishes in the three handicap divisions.

Organizing committee chair Tonichi Tuason and vice chair Bones Floro yesterday announced the roster of sponsorships for the 12th staging of the Bill Shaw.

Golforce, Tanduay Distillery, Citigold Priority Banking and Omega are the major sponsors while Toyota Balintawak, Toyota Motors Phils. and Northwest Airlines are hole-in-one sponsors.

The hole sponsors are PCSO, DBP, William Shaw Foundation, Unilever, Ms Saigon, Amanpulo, Discovery Suites, Rep. Gilberto Duavit, Philippine Sports Commission, Pacsports, GG&A Clubshares, Philippine Junior Golf Federation, Pyramid Construction, Avesco, Kameraworld, Fortune Tobacco, City Club of Manila, Red Ribbon, Asia Brewery and UCC Vienna Coffee.

Tuason said that at least 200 teams will see action in the two-day bash at the east and west courses of the club.

"It's going to be a big year for Wack Wack and the Bill Shaw will get the ball rolling for us," said Tuason

After hosting the Philippine Seniors Open last month and the Philippine Ladies Open last week, Wack Wack is set to complete the grand slam when it stages the Philippine Open in March.

According to Floro, format of play is best-ball with the maximum handicap for guests pegged at 24. They will play one round each at both courses.

Each Bill Shaw participant will be given the new model of Etonic shoes called the Difference as a giveaway.

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All set for PSA Awards

DELASIN

EVERYTHING is set for the PSA Awards Nights with Fil-Am golfer Dorothy Delasin arriving Wednesday morning in time for the affair Thursday night where she will be honored as the country's top sports achiever in year 2000.

President Estrada has been invited as guest of honor and presenter of the top PSA award in the event set at 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Manila where he is also expected to announce the government's new sports policies.

Delasin, a four-time member of the national team who became the youngest player to win an LPGA event in 25 years at 19, beat World Boxing Council flyweight champion Malcolm Tuñacao for the top plum, the first-ever award bestowed on a Fil-Am talent.

"I'm really honored and extremely happy to be voted as PSA Athlete of the Year," said Delasin, whose remarkable rookie campaign in the tough LPGA Tour included a victory in the Giant Eagle Classic in July and a Rookie of the Year award.

PSA president Lito A. Tacujan said invitations to the affair, exclusively for members and their guests, will be available at the PSA reception.

The country's top sports officials, led by Philippine Sports Commission chair Carlos Tuason and Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit and heads of the various NSAs (national sports associations), are also invited to the event.

Aside from Delasin and Tuñacao, the other major awardees are Grandmaster Buenaventura "Bong" Villamayor, racing champion Angelo Barretto, pro cager Danny Ildefonso, amateur cager Ren-Ren Ritualo, amateur golfer Gerard Cantada and physically-challenged powerlifter Angeline Dumapong.

The three-hour rites, sponsored by Red Bull and Agfa and supported by McDonald's, will be telecast on a later date by Viva-Vintage Television over IBC-13.

Also to be honored are the RP Olympians, including taekwondo jins Roberto Cruz, Eva Marie Ditan, Jasmin Strachan and Donald David Geisler and boxers Larry Semillano, Romeo Brin and brothers Arlan and Danilo Lerio, trackster Lerma Balauitan, steeplechaser Eduardo Buenavista, archer Jennifer Chan, equestrienne Toni Leviste, rower Benjie Tolentino, shooter Rasheya Jasmin Ruiz, swimmers Miguel Mendoza, Carlo Piccio, Jenny Rose Guerrero and Liza Danila, and divers Zardo Domenios and Sheila Mae Perez and paralympian javelin thrower Andres Lubin.

Citations will be given to the San Miguel Beermen and the San Juan Knights (pro basketball), the La Salle Green Archers (amateur basketball), Mark Paragua (chess), Silver Story (horse of the year), Jennifer Rosales (pro golf-women), Paul del Rosario (jetski), Philip Alvendia (karting), and Glenn Aguilar (motocross), Andres Lubin (paralympics), Antonio Taguibao (powerlifting) and the men's chess Olympiad team.

Cordilleran is WBC champ

BY DELMAR CARIÑO,
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Ricky Gayamo became the first Cordilleran World Boxing Council champion when he captured the international bantamweight title at the Baguio Convention Center Saturday night.

Gayamo, 25, unloaded a flurry of punches in the sixth round to stop via technical knockout compatriot and defending titlist Jovy Halog of the Bebot Elorde Stable.

Caught by Halog's pinpoint jabs in the early going, Gayamo, a native of Hungduan, Ifugao, poured it on in the sixth that forced international referee Bruce Mactavish to step in and stop the fight two minutes and 49 seconds in the round.

Halog, who won his crown by a first round knockout over Theo Modiste in November last year in France, managed to keep Gayamo at bay in the first three rounds by landing straight jabs that reddened Gayamo's face.

Gayamo, however, refused to be intimidated as he pressed his attack, sneaking in body shots that stunned Halog, 25, to the delight of a hometown crowd that came to support the biggest boxing card to be staged here.

"He is taller and a very good fighter," Gayamo, obviously nervous, told the INQUIRER before he climbed the ring for the 12-round fight.

Halog's downfall though started as early as the second round when he altered his fight plan by opting to slug it out with the Ifugao challenger, thus negating his reach and height advantage

He engaged Gayamo in a torrid exchange of bombs in the fifth round with him as the aggressor, a move Gayamo knew would pay off in his favor in the latter rounds.

Gayamo said: "*Nakatsamba ako. Pag nag*-hit-and-run *siya dahil sa taas niya, matatalo ako. Buti na lang, sumabay siya.*"

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SPORTS
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MILLER

MILLER TOP PICK

Red Bull gets flashy guard

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

BATANG Red Bull made flashy guard Willie Miller the PBA top draft pick yesterday, letting go of promising Fil-American John Arigo, who wasn't chosen until the fifth pick.

That started a string of surprising twists during the annual event which stretched till the seventh round and netted a record 48 players chosen by 10 teams.

"He (Miller) has a chemistry with the players and we are concerned about Jimwell Torion's injury that may take six months to heal," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao.

Team manager Tony Chua said they would offer a three-year contract to Miller, who played for the Nueva Ecija Patriots in the Metropolitan Basketball Association.

Touted Fil-Am Michael Hrabak was a no-show but was nonetheless chosen second by Shell Velocity which, by picking him, was making a "big gamble," according to coach Perry Ronquillo.

Barangay Ginebra then pulled a surprise of its own, grabbing little-known Mark Caguioa, a muscle-bound, 6-foot-1 blond who has shooting and athleticism, according to coach Allan Caidic.

The 21-year-old Caguioa, who left for the United States since he was nine, flew in just yesterday morning from Los Angeles and immediately went to practice with the Kings.

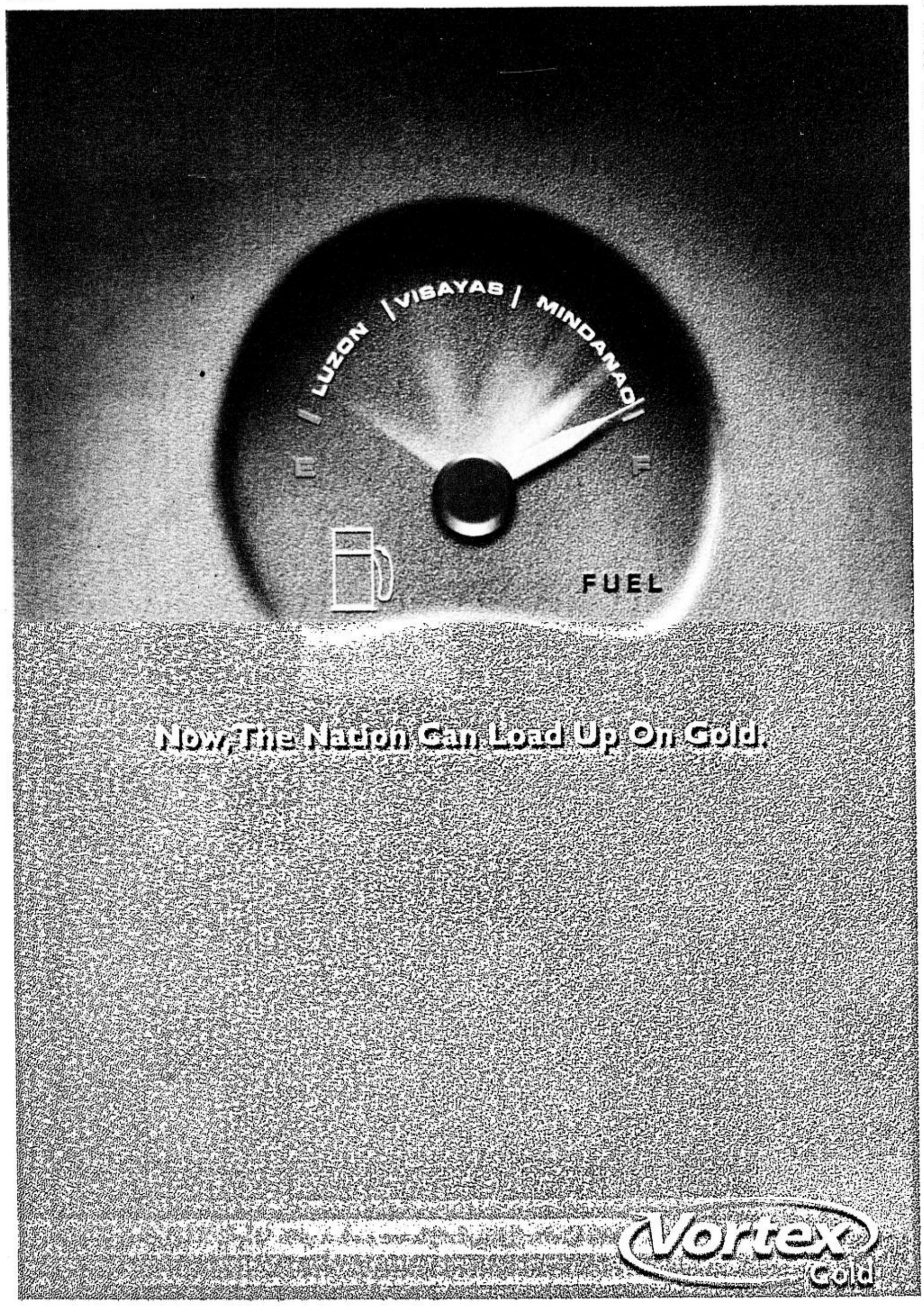
Mobiline coach Louie Alas opted for some familiar faces in taking in his former ward in the MBA Gilbert Demape before moving on to get two more erstwhile Manila Metrostars, among others.

When Alaska's turn came, coach Tim Cone called on Arigo, a bald and lean Reggie Miller look-alike, who was one of the contenders for the top pick.

"We were surprised that teams are not picking John," said Alaska manager Joaqui Trillo. "So when he was still there when our turn came, I just looked at Tim and said 'go for it.'"

Trillo added that they will definitely give the 6-foot-3 Arigo a three-year contract.

RED BULL/ A23



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■ Bare Eye: An Erap fanatic gives up A26
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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

■ Stop dumping in our place, people protest A27
■ WPD team probes women's 'salvage' A29

Barges bringing back trash to Manila

TWO BARGES full of Metro Manila's trash, unable to unload their stinking cargo on Semirara Island in Antique after a temporary restraining order (TRO) stopped them, on Saturday left for Manila.

The return of the barges was a victory for Antique officials and environmentalists who have opposed the use of Semirara Island as a dump for Metro Manila's waste. They said they were very happy with the departure of the barges but added they would remain vigilant.

The two barges left after the Semirara Coast Guard showed the unidentified captains of the vessels President Estrada's order, which scrapped the landfill project in the island, according to Caluya Mayor Nikita Franque.

But he said they were also concerned that the garbage may be thrown into the sea or on islands on the way to Manila.

The two barges, which were docked off Semirara for a week, left at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Saturday and are expected to reach Manila early today. Travel time from Semirara to Manila is about 36 hours.

"We can relax now but we are not going to stop our vigil until the court comes up with a permanent injunction," Caluya Vice Mayor Diosdado Egina said in Hiligaynon in a telephone interview.

The President released the order for the barges to return to Manila on Friday, according to Sally Zaldivar-Perez, presidential legislative liaison officer of the Senate.

The two barges were docked about 100 meters away from Dapdap Pier, the site of the picket line on the western part of Semirara Island that was bulldozed on Jan. 10, ostensibly for "widening purposes."

BARGES BRINGING/ A27

TOXIC FUMES rise from burning garbage that remains uncollected along this Makati road. Residents of this area have started complaining about chest pains. JOAN BONDOC

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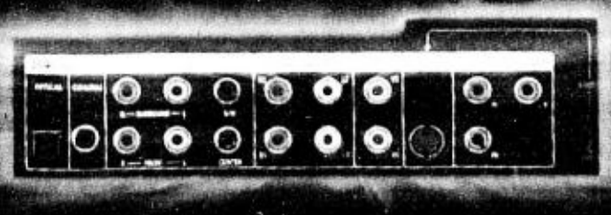

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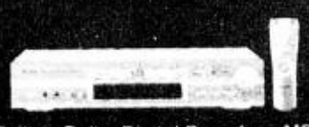

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Fugitive falls

JOHN Patrick Gillespie, who was reportedly being hunted by authorities in his native Australia for game-fixing in horse racing, was arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport shortly before he could leave on a Sydney flight Saturday night.

Gillespie, a frequent Manila visitor, was seen by Col. Angelito Tan, intelligence chief of the immigration unit at Naia, while the Australian was checking in for his Qantas flight. Tan said he recognized the man from his photos in the immigration bureau files. The foreigner was taken to the Bureau of Immigration detention center in Taguig pending his deportation. *TJ Burgonio*

Pasig cop, 2 other men slain

BY AGNES E. DONATO

FOR TRYING to confiscate the guns of three men, a police major and two other men were killed in front of a beerhouse in Pasig City early yesterday morning.

Two of the dead were identified as Chief Insp. Danilo Balaysoche, 42, of Mabuhay Homes, Binangonan, Rizal, and his driver Wilfredo Francisco, 44, of Barangay San Lorenzo Ruiz, Taytay, Rizal.

Balaysoche and Francisco each sustained several gunshot wounds and died on the way to the Rizal Medical Center in Pasig.

Balaysoche was the chief of the Pasig police Precinct 9 in Barangay San Joaquin.

Police had not ruled out the possibility that the third dead man, who remained unidentified, could be one of the gunmen who killed Balaysoche and his driver.

No one has come forward to claim the unidentified man's body from a Pasig funeral house.

PO3 Efren Calix said that at about 3:30 a.m. yesterday, Balaysoche received a call from an unidentified man.

The caller reportedly informed the precinct chief that there were three armed men in front of Virgal Pubhouse on San Guillermo Street in Barangay Buting.

Balaysoche and his driver Francisco went to the bar and confirmed the report.

Balaysoche reportedly tried to frisk the three men, but the latter refused. Witnesses said that all of a sudden, the men pulled out .45 cal. pistols and shot Balaysoche in the face and body.

They also shot Francisco in the neck, arm and shoulder.

The unidentified man was shot in the forehead and the body.

Investigators learned that Balaysoche was able to shoot at the men several times before he passed out.

Witnesses said the unidentified men fled on board a Ford Fierra that drove toward C-5 Road.

The suspects reportedly ran off with Balaysoche's .45 service firearm.

An Erap fanatic gives up

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

DAMN it, forget about Chavit Singson, blurted Javier Dizon, plain *Ka* Abeng to barrio mates in Vergara, Mandaluyong. Ka Abeng swore everything Singson had exposed about the President, which saw the Ilocos governor detailing why he had tagged Erap Estrada the lord of all gambling lords, had no merit.

I'm making this little report because Ka Abeng, a dear *kumpadre*, is a rare case.

While practically everybody in our village by the Pasig River, from kids who could hardly spell the President's complete name, to wiser, creaky old citizens, have started to, one by one, submit a guilty verdict on Mr. Estrada, Ka Abeng gamely held his ground.

He was, if you may call him, the unshakeable holdout, and a sort of Last Mohican.

He would fight, debate, break gin bottles to insist on Erap Estrada's innocence.

* * *

Let me confess that, although we at times would share a little drink by the roadside, I strictly made it a point to prevent our talk from straying onto the Erap Impeachment telenovela.

I had been successful in this. Ka Abeng would get up before the sun to kill a pig, clean and prepare it for the embers, then roast it into a perfect bronze *lechon* by midday. After he had sold, kilo by kilo, the favorite native delicacy, Abeng would join a group of jobless, bare-chested males by the roadside in a no-nonsense game of *tonghits*. They called him the regular loser, but he didn't seem to mind.

Then, as the sun started to set, Abeng would pick up his regular ration, a full bottle of chilled Ginebra San Miguel, from Annie's store, and drink it all to himself all the way to dinner.

The routine hardly varied. If *Pareng* Abeng, say, had extra cash, he would opt for a second bottle. But, half-sober or deep into narcotic numbness, nobody could shake the man's undying faith in his idol and favorite president, Joseph Estrada.

Abeng swore that, unless they could come up with some solid evidence directly linking Erap Estrada to any of the assorted evils being slapped on him, he would not be swayed.

Erap forever, he would blurt, like a soldier pledging his life and limb for the Republic.

Repeat: I never even tried to talk impeachment with Kumpadreng Abeng.

I honor and treasure our friendship that much.

* * *

Then, on Saturday, after we had buried my friend, writer P.A. Zapanta, at the South Cemetery in Makati, I tried to wash away the blues and shared a bottle of fine Torres 10 brandy with old friends.

Pareng Abeng, lugging his regular bottle of gin, joined us. We had special *pulutan: kalderateng usa.*

I was, however, taken aback when, with hardly any hint, Pareng Abeng started to talk on the ongoing impeachment trial.

I tried to excuse myself by saying I had to make a call, but my kumpadre insisted that I stay a while.

He sounded very urgent. I thought he would repeat his solid defense of his Erap, his idol.

No, he explained, it's about the testimony of Edgardo Espiritu before the Senate tribunal took its break last weekend.

Suko na ako padre, Abeng said shaking his gray, weary head. He raised his hands in surrender and explained that, with Mr. Espiritu's moving testimony, he became irrevocably convinced that President Estrada was guilty as charged.

Abeng pleaded no contest.

* * *

Ganuon pala talaga kadumi, ganuon pala talaga kasama, he said.

Yes, Abeng said he had never thought his idol to be that bad and dirty.

Actually, Ka Abeng explained, he first started to be shaken after the testimony of Clarissa Ocampo.

He said he was bothered and shocked by the act of the President signing his name as Jose Velarde.

Just the same, Ka Abeng bared, he tried to hold his ground.

He prayed for the defense as he followed the Erap Impeachment show, day after day.

His faith rose and ebbed.

Then, out of nowhere, came **Espiritu, the former Estrada finance secretary, to bare it all and break the camel's back, so to say.**

Today, you don't have to debate with this village philosopher and sidestreet judge that Erap Estrada's once saleable Robin Hood myth is in truth a horror story.

Just like most of his friends and lechon customers, Pareng Abeng is solidly convinced that his President and former idol robbed both the rich and poor to make life very sweet for his mistresses.

Yes, Pareng Abeng admitted he had been cheated, just like countless others who had voted for Erap.

However, after having honestly accepted defeat, Abeng Dizon swore his daily bottle of gin has started to taste sweet, relieving again.

Better late than never, he said.

Bong, Lani inaugurate 'first' green center in Cavite hospital

CAVITE Gov. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and his wife Lani Mercado Revilla on Thursday inaugurated the country's first and only hospital-based ecology center at the Andres Bonifacio Memorial Hospital in Trece Martires City.

The center primarily aims to help in proper waste disposal and management system while promoting a clean and healthy environment through tree-planting, gardening, composting of bio-degradable waste and other environment-friendly activities.

Revilla approved the disbursement of about P700,000 for the purchase of the equipment and shed for composting.

The hospital personnel and employees, members of the Hospital-Based Employees Association, will provide the services.

Under the plan, each department will have a designated area in the hospital compound where they will plant trees, vegetables and perform other related activities.

Revilla said he hopes the creation of the ecological center will set a good example for other government agencies.

"We hope to show to the world what small agencies can do to help promote a clean and green environment through the collective efforts of government personnel, the private sector and other supporters of the program," he said.

The center is the brainchild of the governor who is also the chair of the Provincial Environment Development Council; his wife, who is also the chair of the Provincial Technical Committee on Solid Waste Management; and the provincial health officer, Dr. Ma. Vilma V. Diez.

Joey in Parañaque, Rudy F in QC

THE OPPOSITION Lakas NUCD-UMDP-Kampi coalition party recently picked incumbent Mayor Joey Marquez and a great grandson of a signatory to the declaration of Philippine independence as official candidates for mayor and congressman, respectively, in Parañaque City.

In Quezon City, surveys reportedly show that actor Rudy "Da Boy" Fernandez is the most likely successor of outgoing Quezon City Mayor Ismael "Mel" Mathay Jr., according to a statement issued by the Fernandez camp.

Dr. Eduardo "Edza" Zialcita was confirmed as the opposition party's congressional bet in Parañaque during the party's national executive committee meeting held Jan. 5 at the Lakas national headquarters, said Lakas NUCD executive director Joey Rufino.

Rufino also announced the confirmation of the reelection bids of Mayor Marquez, a movie actor himself, and Vice Mayor Florencion Bernabe Jr.

Zialcita's great-grandfather Agapito Cailles Zialcita was one of the original signatories to the declaration of national independence.

Dr. Zialcita's selection effectively ended the bitter controversy surrounding the Lakas choice of its congressional candidate in Parañaque.

Zialcita served in various positions in the two previous administrations.

During the term of former President Aquino, he was both chair and general manager of the Public Estates Authority, deputy minister of information, administrative board member of channels 9 and 13, and member of various presidential task forces.

Under the Fidel Ramos administration, he served as a board trustee of the Pag-ibig Fund, a consultant of the presidential management staff and the Department of Housing, and chair of the first Kabisig assembly.

As a businessman and private citizen, he was president of the Philippine Council of Management, Manila Jaycees, Philippine Society of Training and Development, JCI Asia Development Council, and the National Real Estate Association-Triangle Home Association.

Presently, he is vice president of Creba.

In Quezon City, Marquez's colleague Fernandez continues to dominate the surveys for the mayoral race, according to a Fernandez statement.

Among the other aspirants for the mayoralty are House minority leader Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte,

MARQUEZ

ZIALCITA

FERNANDEZ

Rep. Dante Liban of the 2nd District and Councilor Ismael "Chuck" Mathay III.

The young Mathay, son of the incumbent mayor, lost to Liban in the 1995 elections.

Fernandez took up Commerce at the University of Sto. Tomas. His family roots are in Bicol and Pampanga.

Fernandez has been sworn in as a member of the Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) and appointed as chair of the PMP-Quezon City chapter by PMP president and Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado.

Aside from Mercado, other prominent Quezon City residents like Sen. Tito Sotto are reportedly also supporting Fernandez.

Fernandez is married to actress Lorna Tolentino.

Fernandez said he prefers to be called a "public servant" and not a "politician."

"It is easy to talk to a politician but it is not easy to find him," Fernandez said in Pilipino. "On the other hand, it should be easy to find and talk to a public servant, who should be always ready to make sacrifices for the people and the country."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, January 15, 2001
2nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Heb 5:1-10**
Gospel: **Mk 2:18-22**

One day, when the disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees were fasting, some people asked Jesus, "Why is it that both the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but yours do not?" Jesus answered, "How can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the day will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them and on that day they will fast.

No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old coat, because the new patch will shrink and tear away from the old cloth, making a worse tear. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins, for the wine would burst the skins and then both the wine and the skins would be lost. But new wine, new skins!"

Commentary:

Proper timing, proper setting, this is what today's Gospel is about. You don't attend a wedding party in your house clothes and slippers or in boxer shorts and undershirt, even if there is nothing intrinsically wrong about wearing such an attire. Green jokes are for adult drinking sprees, you don't throw them in a homily for funeral mass. Otherwise, you will be out of place. If you feast when you should be fasting, you are really putting wine in the wrong place: new wine belongs to fresh wineskins.

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Asistio vows to restore 'old glory' in Caloocan

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

AFTER a series of scandals rocking the Asistio clan, Caloocan Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio is bent on regaining the family's lost political glory by beating fierce rival Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo in the May local elections.

"The controversies do not bother me," Asistio told the INQUIRER. "It's the people who'll decide. They know who has served them well and they know who failed them."

Asistio, who is serving his third and last term as congressman, is set to announce his mayoral bid in the first week of February. He will face Malonzo who ended the Asistio dynasty by defeating the lawmaker's brother Macario Jr. in 1995.

The lawmaker is confident of unseating Malonzo despite the many controversies, which hounded his nine-year career, particularly his links with embattled President Estrada and the frequent brushes with the law of his troubled sons "Peting" and "Pachot."

"I think my association with the President will win the hearts of Caloocan residents because it shows that their congressman has principles," he said.

"I'm not like other politicians who keep on changing parties for their own good. I value friendship and I have loyalty no matter what."

Asistio has been the subject of harping criticism from anti-Estrada groups for allegedly being part of the President's controversial "Midnight Cabinet."

"Regarding my sons, I admit they've been a big headache. But I never tolerated them," he said. "I'm still hoping they would change and go back to their senses."

The issue gave Malonzo and administration councilors the opportunity to hit the lawmaker.

"They should criticize me for what I've done, if I have stolen money from the government or if I failed the people," Asistio said. "But since they can't find any, they hit those associated with me.

"I'm not like Malonzo who's being criticized on issues wherein he's directly involved."

Luisito "Peting" Asistio and Luisito "Patchot" have long been regarded as problem children for the controversial lawmaker.

Last year, Peting was shot during a drug buy-bust operation in his Dagat-Dagatan residence. Months later, his brother Pachot allegedly shot his landlord in Caloocan after a heated argument.

If he becomes mayor, Asistio said, he would restore good governance in the city, which Malonzo allegedly failed to implement during his six-year term.

"What we need are good governance and good leadership," Asistio said.

"Bago siya humakot ng tao para magprotesta laban kay Erap, *hakutin dapat muna niya ang basura ng* Caloocan," he said of Malonzo. "That's his basic responsibility."

Opposition Councilor Henry Cammayo will be Asistio's runningmate. Cammayo is expected to face administration Councilor Luis "Tito" Varela.

Vice Mayor Oscar Malapitan, a former Malonzo ally who defected to the Asistio camp last year, will run for Congress to represent the city's first district against Rep. Enrico Echiverri, a staunch supporter of the mayor.

Asistio's ally Councilor Chito Abel and administration Councilor Edgar Erice will likely contest the congressional seat for the city's second district.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Admissibility of extra-judicial confession—Appellant's extrajudicial confession is flawed with respect to its admissibility. For a confession to be admissible, it must satisfy the following requirements: (1) it must be voluntary; (2) it must be made with the assistance of competent and independent counsel; (3) it must be express; and (4) it must be in writing. The records show that the admissions by appellant was verbal. It was also uncounselled. A verbal admission allegedly made by an accused during the investigation, without the assistance of counsel at the time of his arrest and even before his formal investigation is not only inadmissible for being violative of the right to counsel during criminal investigations, it is also hearsay. Even if the confession or admission were gospel truth, if it was made without assistance of counsel and without a valid waiver of such assistance, the confession is inadmissible in evidence, regardless of the absence of coercion or even if it had been voluntarily given. [Citations omitted.] [*En Banc*, Justice Quisumbing, People v. Valdez, G. R. No. 129296, September 25, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

Anti-drug body to award drug-busting LGUs

BY DAVE M. VERIDIANO

THE COUNTRY'S top anti-drug agency will start giving awards this year to any local government unit that has scored big against the traffic of illegal drugs, as part of its relentless effort to counter the proliferation and use of narcotics.

The "Best Performer Award" will go to any LGU that has made significant contributions in the drug campaign.

At stake is a presidential trophy and cash prize of P1 million for the top drug buster. Three regional winners shall also be conferred with presidential plaques of commendation.

Deputy Director General Jewel Canson, head of the National Drug Law Enforcement and Prevention Coordinating Center (DEP Center), said the award program aims to institutionalize a system of recognizing significant contributions and outstanding performance of cities, municipalities, and barangays against the drug menace.

Canson added that with the awards, they hoped to transform communities into drug-free localities, as envisioned by President Estrada in Executive Order 249.

"The presidential awards to be conferred on the best performers will undoubtedly motivate and inspire a greater sense of commitment to boost "Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MAD)," Canson said.

DEP Center records show that as of this week, there are already four provinces, 14 cities, 12 municipalities, and 13 barangays—a total of 43 nominees—contending for the awards.

A national committee was created to see to the awards program with the Interior secretary as chair and the Defense secretary as vice chair.

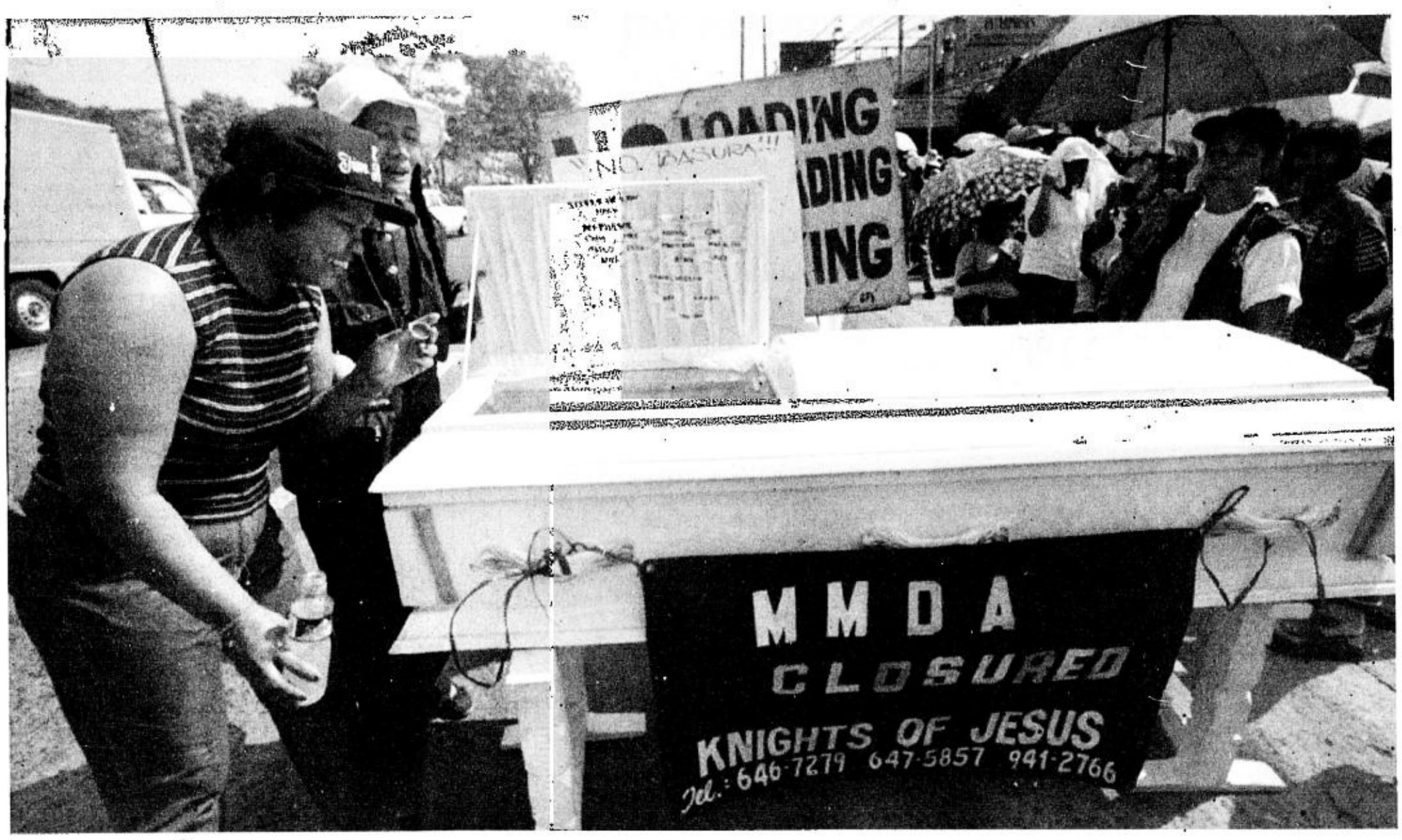
Canson said nominees would be judged based on the organization and strength of their barangay anti-drug councils; formulation and implementation of their advocacy and information campaigns; and the way they monitor, report, arrest, investigate, prosecute and rehabilitate drug pushers.

Six years of planning disposal

THE CHRONOLOGY of events in the Metro Manila garbage issue:

- In 1994, an executive committee chaired by the MMDA and the Cabinet officer for regional development for Metro Manila was created to oversee the build-operate-transfer (BOT) implementation of the waste disposal sites in San Mateo, Rizal and in Carmona, Cavite. The project involved the setting up of waste-to-energy (incinerator) facility.
- Eleven proponents submitted their proposals under the BOT scheme. On Nov. 19, 1997, the Neda ICC-Technical Board endorsed the project to the ICC Cabinet level.
- On Dec. 19, 1997, without those conditions being complied with, a contract was signed between Jancom and the government represented by DENR Secretary Victor Ramos, MMDA Chair Prospero Oreta and NCR CORD Dionisio de la Serna. The contract was recommended to the Office of President Ramos for approval.
- Then-Executive Secretary Alexander Aguirre referred the matter on March 16, 1998 to the Neda for its comment and recommendation considering that the project had as yet no Neda ICC approval.
- On May 25, 1998, Aguirre recommended to Ramos non-approval of the Jancom contract as it had not yet complied with the conditions mentioned in the contract.
- On June 23, 1998, the Presidential Management Staff recommended to Ramos to refer/endorse the Jancom contract to the next administration.
- On Sept. 11, 1998, President Estrada issued Memorandum Order No. 19 reconstituting the Excom designating Flagship Secretary Roberto Aventajado as its chair.
- After several months of review of the Jancom contract/project, the Excom decided to refer the matter back to MMDA on May 11, 1999, because of the lack of Neda-ICC approval. MMDA in turn referred the matter to Neda, which on Aug. 16, 1999 decided not to pursue the project due to changes in policy, i.e. passage of Clean Air Act, which bans incinerators, and economic considerations.
- The Jancom tipping fee was US$91.00/ton. The present cost of MMDA is US$16.60/ton. The lowest bid in the landfill bidding was US$18.89/ton.
- In February 2000, MMDA and in coordination with the Greater Metropolitan Manila Solid Waste Management Committee (GMMSWMC) published the solicitation of offers for the construction and operation of a sanitary landfill for 25 years on a build-own-operate (BOO) basis. Nine firms responded to the invitation.
- On March 9, 2000, Jancom filed a case against MMDA and GMMSWMC to stop the bidding process. It was able to secure a TRO from the Pasig RTC, thus stopping the bidding process.
- The TRO was subsequent lifted by the Court of Appeals (CA), and the MMDA proceeded with the opening of bids on June 6, 2000. However, on Aug. 15, 2000, the RTC Pasig again ordered the MMDA to stop the bidding process. On Sept. 1, 2000, the CA enjoined the RTC from enforcing its TRO, thus allowing the MMDA to continue with the bidding process.
- On Sept. 20, 2000, the MMDA Pre-qualification Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) found that of the five pre-qualified proponents, only two qualified for the final selection stage. Before it could recommend to the MMDA chair and Metro Manila Council, the CA issued on Nov. 13, 2000 an order upholding the Jancom contract, thus stopping the bidding process for the landfill project. The government requested a reconsideration of the CA decision.
- On Sept. 21, 2000, MMDA chair Jejomar Binay met with Metro Manila mayors to map out contingency measures in light of the stoppage of the bidding by the CA decision and the impending closure of the San Mateo landfill by Dec. 31, 2000.
- On Oct. 12, 2000, the Metro Manila Council approved a recommendation to establish two controlled dumpsites in Navotas and Muntinlupa. It also met with proponents in the bidding to see if they could set up an interim facility by Jan. 1, 2001.
- On Nov. 28, 2000, the Council approved the recommendation to negotiate with DMCI-R-II Builders and Waste Action Recycling for the setting up an interim facility in Semirara, Antique and in Mariveles, Bataan, respectively.
- On Dec. 15, 2000, Secretary Aventajado and Binay met with the provincial council of Antique to explain the Semirara project.
- On Dec. 29, 2000, the Antique RTC issued a 20-day TRO prohibiting MMDA and the DMCI-R-II Builders from dumping garbage in Semirara. The government appealed the TRO with the Court of Appeals, which set the petition hearing for Jan. 15, 2001.
- On Dec. 31, 2000, the San Mateo landfill was closed.
- On Jan. 12, 2001, President Estrada ordered the reopening of the San Mateo landfill because of the emergency, while MMDA is looking for other alternative sites for waste disposal.

(Prepared by the Greater Metropolitan Manila Solid Waste Management Committee, Jan. 13, 2001)



RESIDENTS use a symbolic coffin as part of a barricade in Masinag, Antipolo to prevent dump trucks, like the one below, from proceeding to the San Mateo Sanitary Landfill. JOAN BONDOC

VALENZUELA BARANGAY

Stop dumping in our place, people protest

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

SOME 18,000 residents of Barangay Lingunan in Valenzuela City would stage protest actions if the local government continued dumping the city's garbage in their area.

Through a memorandum of agreement, Mayor Emmanuel "Bobbit" Carlos has promised to look for another garbage site after the closure last Dec. 31 of the Lingunan dumpsite.

But barangay chair Noel Delesmo doubts if the mayor would fulfill his promise.

"The mayor has always been promising to look for another dumpsite, but the use of the Lingunan dumpsite has always been extended," said Delesmo.

The **Inquirer** tried to get Carlos' side, but the mayor was not available for comment.

Delesmo said that if Carlos breaks his promise again, then residents would not hesitate to stage rallies to urge the government to stop dumping garbage in their area.

A 15-day grace period had been given to the city government for it to clean up the dump.

In 1998, Carlos and residents agreed to temporarily dump the city's garbage in Barangay Lingusan for six months, Delesmo said.

But the city government always asked the residents to delay the closure of the controlled dumpsite apparently to stave off the effects of the growing garbage crisis in Metro Manila, Delesmo said.

The government had claimed the dumpsite, which is near a school and a residential area, is safe, according to Delesmo.

"But they can't deny that people are getting sick because of it," he said.

Last year, the city's garbage problem revealed the brewing conflict between Carlos and his party mate, Rep. Magtanggol "Magi" Gunigundo.

The mayor criticized Gunigundo for recommending to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources the closure of the dumpsite.

But Gunigundo said he was only responding to the appeal of residents.

Construction worker kills self

HIS family said construction worker Eduardo Lascano, 42, had been depressed since his wife left him on New Year's Day. Last Monday, Lascano decided to end his misery.

Lascano hanged himself with an electrical cord in his house in Barangay Kaligayahan, Novaliches, Quezon City, said police.

His body was found hanging at 11:02 a.m. Monday, said SPO1 Efren Sobrepena. No other sign of injury was found on the body, the policeman added.

Lascano and his wife Evelyn had a misunderstanding just before the end of 2000 and the woman left on Jan. 1, according to their son, whom police did not identify.

Philip C. Tubeza

Barges bringing back trash to Manila

(From page A25)

Even if he's a member of President Estrada's LAMP, Antipolo Mayor Angelito Gatlabayan joined rock-throwing protesters, who blocked traffic on Saturday on a highway leading to the nearby San Mateo Sanitary Landfill (SMSL), which Mr. Estrada on Thursday ordered to reopen to ease Metro Manila's garbage problem.

This developed even as Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara has said the SMSL only would be used a maximum of six months.

Health Secretary Alberto Romualdez Jr. on Saturday also warned his colleagues that a health emergency is imminent from the spread of disease if trash isn't collected immediately.

But residents of the area are apparently bent on preventing trash from being dumped again in their neighborhood.

"Not every order of the king should be followed," Gatlabayan said referring to Mr. Estrada's order to reopen the SMSL.

Gatlabayan also said that several non-government groups planned to file a court petition today seeking an end to the dumping.

Early yesterday, the protesters were on the highway again to block garbage trucks entering the closed SMSL near Antipolo.

Standoff

Riot police used a water cannon to disperse the angry group about 5 a.m., turning the protest into a tense standoff that lingered into the afternoon as the crowd grew steadily to more than 1,000 people.

About 200 police, half wearing bulletproof vests and helmets while carrying shields and truncheons, formed a line to keep the demonstrators from completely blocking vehicles from Manila, about 25 kilometers to the west.

But traffic, slowed to a crawl, was backed up at least a kilometer as the incident spilled over into one lane of the roughly three-lane road.

The SMSL, a sprawling landfill, with parts inside city limits of San Mateo and Antipolo, had closed last Dec. 31. Its reopening was ordered pending resolution of a court dispute over a plan to use remote Semirara Island in Antique as the new dump for trash of some 9 million residents of Metro Manila.

Last year, the local government set a deadline of Dec. 31. The dump closed then, and garbage has been piling up on the streets of Manila.

Late Saturday night, about 150-200 protesters blockaded the highway with at least three vehicles and a hastily constructed wooden stage until police arrived with a water cannon and a bulldozer to clear the road, witnesses said.

"People were pleading for mercy, but they did not stop," said Sister Siny Gipoleo, one of seven nuns who were knocked down by the high-pressure water spray.

Moved back to the adjacent sidewalk, the protesters became angry each time a garbage truck approached, with several breaking through police lines to halt the vehicle, which then was pelted with stones.

One driver was struck in the face by a rock. Even as Gatlabayan shouted "Don't throw stones! Don't throw stones!" a protester managed to yank the truck's fuel line loose as more stones rained down, shattering the side window before the driver managed to break through.

Dumped in Nueva Ecija

In Nueva Ecija, more than 100 truckloads of Metro Manila garbage are being dumped in Barangay Macabaklay in Gapan town without authority from local officials, according to priests from the Catholic Church in the city.

Father Edwin Beley, social action director of the Diocese of Cabanatuan, said he, four other priests and a town councilor, visited the place where the garbage was being dumped.

"The garbage was dumped in a ravine in Macabaklay," Beley said. "We also saw one bulldozer moving the garbage into the ravine and a checker listing down the plate number of trucks coming to dump garbage in the area."

Beley said the dump is near a creek, which is connected to other creeks in the town. The dump is about 15 km from Gapan town proper and near the boundary of General Tinio, Nueva Ecija and San Miguel in Bulacan.

Beley said nobody could say who authorized the trucks to dump garbage in the area. But scavengers, who have been sifting through the garbage, told them that the garbage came from Metro Manila, Beley said.

At least 40 trucks have dumped garbage since four nights ago, said Beley.

Politics

Mud and dirt of partisan politics is compounding the stink of Metro Manila's garbage problem, according to Robert Aventajado, President Estrada's adviser on flagship projects.

With elections just around the corner, Aventajado, who is said to be running himself for senator, yesterday complained that no local executive is willing to touch the garbage issue.

If not for the elections, Aventajado said the government would have lesser problems with garbage.

"Many are telling us privately that they have no objection to putting the garbage in their areas, that they have a site for it, but they cannot say it in public because election time is near," Aventajado said of local executives in the metropolis.

Like Angara, Aventajado assured that the reopening of SMSL only would be from one to six months as they prepare a new site for garbage disposal.

But Aventajado said he thinks they would find a new dump in a month.

"By then, we can again close down the San Mateo landfill," he said.

Angara plan opposed

In Angeles City, the multi-sectoral group Pinoy Gumising Ka Movement (PGKM) has opposed the plan of Angara to use the Clark Special Economic Zone as the new dump for Metro Manila's garbage even as the author of the Clean Air Act, Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta is now considering lifting the ban on incinerators.

Acosta suggested that the use of modern incinerators might solve the garbage crisis in Metro Manila.

But PGKM chair Ruperto Cruz has another idea on eliminating the trash problem.

"Metro Manila folks should eat their own garbage," he said. "Kapampangans do not want garbage at Clark."

Cruz, who heads the Resign Estrada Movement of Pampanga (REMP), said the Estrada administration seemed to have run out of ideas in solving the garbage crisis in Metro Manila that it now wants to convert Clark into a dump.

Cruz said they would organize protest actions and set up barricades to stop garbage trucks from Metro Manila into entering the special economic zone.

"We will fight them," he said. "We will never allow a single truck to dump garbage in Clark. Pampanga, including Clark and Angeles City, has its own garbage problem. We do not have to solve the garbage problem of Metro Manila."

Other technology

But Rep. Acosta said on Saturday during the Second Philippine Forum at the Holiday Inn Resort in Clark Field, that the government should reconsider using "other technology, which includes modern incinerators," to rid the Metro Manila of its garbage problem.

He said garbage in every 500-meter area in Metro Manila, especially along the C-5 Road, could bring worse effects on the health of the residents of the metropolis.

About 6,000 to 8,000 tons of garbage is collected daily in Metro Manila, Acosta said.

"These are about 2,000 trucks of garbage everyday. Imagine how many tons of garbage would be accumulated in a month. Metro Manila could be literally buried with garbage," he said.

As an immediate measure, the government should first look for a controlled dumpsite similar to the SMSL, Acosta said. But he clarified that San Mateo landfill is not really a landfill because it lacks proper facilities like sufficient layers and methane gas exhaust.

Although there is strong pressure from environmentalist groups like Greenpeace not to use incinerators, Acosta said the government is obliged to implement garbage disposal measures in the wake of the current waste crisis.

While the people are being educated about recycling and garbage segregation, the piling up of garbage would overtake the educational campaign and lead to greater health problems, Acosta pointed out.

He said there are safer technologies like the waste-to-energy incinerators that can burn garbage. He added that incineration could not totally be banned because some wastes from hospitals and medical clinics have to be burned. ***Hazel P. Villa, PDI Visayas Bureau; Anselmo Roque and Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Armand Nocum; AP***

The loneliness of the old and the abandoned

A WEEK after fire killed a 92-year-old woman and destroyed two barracks and the social hall of the Golden Acres Home for the Aged in Quezon City, life is back to normal for the 350 old men and women who live there. For most of them, "normal" means long, quiet hours of being alone, probably thinking of loved ones past and gone, of youth, of the remaining days of their lives. The INQUIRER's Joan Bondoc one morning after the fire "intruded" into their world.

OLD man feeds cats

THE old man who feeds the cats writes a letter to a loved one working in Bahrain.

WOMEN sun themselves in rocking chairs that, like them, are faded and rickety.

A WOMAN feeds herself at mealtime.

Navotas celebrates 95th year for 3 days

NAVOTAS Mayor Toby Tiangco and other town officials yesterday led the kick-off ceremony for the celebration of the town's 95th foundation day.

Simultaneous church services in Navotas yesterday morning signaled the start of the three-day celebration.

This was followed by a motorcade around the town and a parade from C-4 to the municipal hall participated in by representatives of the various sectoral organizations, including the 14 Ms Navotas 2001 candidates.

Today, ecumenical prayers will follow the 8 a.m. flag ceremony in the municipal hall grounds after which a job fair will be launched.

The affair culminates tomorrow, Araw ng Navotas, with the ringing of bells in the town's churches, a thanksgiving mass in the municipal grounds at 8 a.m., followed by awarding ceremonies for the Outstanding Citizens of the Year, the Outstanding Public Servants of the Year and other awards.

The Ms Navotas Pageant will be showcased at 8 p.m. at the Navotas Sports Complex, with San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada as guest of honor.

Manila's Finest must keep doing its best–Razon

THE WESTERN Police District last week celebrated its centennial with its commander, Chief Supt. Avelino Razon Jr., exhorting his men to "continue the tradition of service and heroism" of the force known as Manila's Finest.

"The WPD must do its best to help and protect the people of Manila," Razon told a crowd of about 1,000 uniformed policemen, retired officers of the WPD and its predecessor, Manila Police Department, national and local government officials, their families and other civilians gathered at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park.

Guest of honor was President Estrada, who was given a 21-gun salute. Other guests included Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim, a former city police chief; national and Metro Manila police directors Panfilo Lacson and Edgardo Aglipay; and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Razon also praised former chiefs of the city police for turning the WPD "from a colonial institution into a truly Filipino institution run by Filipinos and protecting Filipinos."

Razon said that before the end of his tour of duty, he would like to oversee two main projects—the full modernization of WPD operations and the creation of a separate police team to combat youth-related crimes.

"We envision a WPD where all commands and correspondence will be done through a network of computers," he said. "We will also set up a unit to specifically combat gang wars and juvenile crimes."

The President praised the WPD and the police for keeping the peace and order during the implementation of his economic program for the poor.

He promised a 5-percent increase in the salary of all Philippine National Police personnel this year. He added that when his term ends three years from now, each policeman will have a house of his own acquired through a government housing program.

Mr. Estrada also presided over the bestowal of awards to WPD's best police commissioned and non-commissioned officers and non-uniformed personnel, as well as citations to various individuals and non-government organizations.

Also among the awardees were the oldest surviving policeman and policewoman retirees, Maximo Castro and Teresa Santos.

The Manila police, first known as the Metropolitan Police Force of Manila, was established on Jan. 9, 1901 pursuant to Act No. 70 of the Taft Commission headed by William Howard Taft, later the first civil governor general of the country under the American regime.

The first chief of police was Gen. Arthur McArthur, the father of the World War II military leader Gen. Douglas McArthur. The police unit was then composed of 357 soldiers picked from the American occupation forces.

Jerome Aning

Five young women rescued from Sampaloc sex den

AGENTS of the Department of the Interior and Local Government Special Task Force (STF) rescued five young women from white slavery and arrested two maintainers in a raid on an apartment in Castañas Street in Sampaloc, Manila on Thursday.

In a report to Secretary Alfredo Lim, Chief Inspector Nelson Yabut, the task force chief, identified the victims as a 14-year-old, two 20-year-olds, an 18-year-old, all natives of Samar, and a 19-year-old from Cagayan Valley.

Senior Insp. Tony Cruz, team leader of the task force, said Christian Kerremas, International director of the Save Our Souls (SOS) child care foundation, sought the assistance of the DILG task force to rescue the girls.

Yabut formed a team to conduct surveillance operations. He said Kerremas posed as a customer and paid P1,500 to suspected maintainer Roger Pastora for the services of one of the young women.

A video camera was set up to take footage of one of the girls having sex with a customer in a motel in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

During investigation, the young women said Pastora was "selling" them to Filipinos and foreigners for a fee ranging from P300 to P3,000, but they were paid only P70 per customer.

Also arrested during the raid was another suspected maintainer, Anjo Bermeo. The two men are now detained at the DILG-Special Task Force detention cell in Quezon City, while appropriate crime charges are being prepared against them.

Manila Water brings 'Tubig' to 150,000

MORE people living in urban centers in the east zone of Metro Manila now have access to safe and potable water, according to Manila Water Co., which supplies water to that zone.

It said that in 1998, one year after the privatization of the government-run Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage Service (MWSS), Manila Water launched "Tubig Para Sa Barangay" to provide residents of densely populated areas access to safe and potable water.

As of today, the project has benefited 150,000 urban poor, it said.

At the core of Tubig is the expansion of water service connections, not just to meet the Ayala-led concessionaire's service obligation targets but also to supply the city's growing water demand.

Another goal of the project is to eliminate the pesky problem of widespread water pilferage, illegal water selling by syndicates, and the danger of water contamination due to poorly connected waterlines.

The project has been successfully undertaken in coordination with the east zone's local government units, from the mayors down to the barangay level, particularly in the heavily populated communities of Quezon City, Pasig City, Marikina City and Mandaluyong City.

Manila Water has also completed Tubig projects jointly with the Office of the First Lady, Dr. Loi Ejercito, in Sta. Ana, Manila and Mandaluyong City.

Under the program, each service connection with its own water meter is shared by a cluster of four to five families. The residents are requested to regularly check their connections for leaks and possible illegal tapping and report these to the proper authorities.

Residents thus get a hands-on role in securing their own water connections, maintain these to ensure the quality of their supply, and police these lines of illegal connections.

Meanwhile, unscrupulous water vendors are neutralized.

For populated areas located in elevated sections, Manila Water has built new deep wells and rehabilitated old MWSS deep wells to augment supply. The new wells have been set up in San Juan, Quezon City and Mandaluyong City.

To date, more than 20,000 residents are benefiting from this additional supply.

Manila Water said it will implement more projects in the similarly rolling terrains of Pasig City, Mandaluyong City, Quezon City, Marikina City and San Juan for an additional 100,000 residents.

Aside from the Tubig and deep well projects, additional watering points are also on the drawing board for Antipolo City and Rizal towns aimed at servicing some 350,000 residents.

From 308,121 connections in August 1997, Manila Water has expanded connections to households to 405,000 as of November 1999.

Las Piñas mayor vows to revive waterways

LAS PIÑAS City Mayor Vergel Aguilar is giving priority to the rehabilitation of creeks, rivers and other waterways in 2001.

Aguilar announced this during his State of the City Address before the members of the city council, barangay chairs, city government department heads and employees when the council opened its first session recently.

Aguilar said that giving priority to the protection and cleaning up of rivers, creeks and other waterways in the city is part of his program for a balanced and sustainable development.

One of the measures he outlined for the eventual clean-up of the city's waterways is the relocation of families living in "dangerous areas" near the riverbank to safer communities.

Aguilar was met with applause when he reported his administration's achievements that he said made Las Piñas City the most awarded highly urbanized city in the Philippines. He cited the city's winning the United Nations Global 500 Roll of Honor for Environmental Achievement last year given in Adelaide, Australia on World Environment Day.

He said that despite the limited income of the city, it was able to implement projects and programs that benefit the residents, such as free hospitalization and the development of depressed areas.

He lauded Vice Mayor Louie Bustamante and members of the city council for their full support and cooperation in the implementation of the programs.

Las Piñas is also a Hall of Fame awardee for being the Cleanest and Greenest City in Metro Manila for three consecutive years, from 1997 to 1999.

PRAY, HE SAYS
Former Speaker Manny Villar took advantage of the crowd of devotees that gathered in Quiapo, Manila during the Jan. 9 Feast of the Black Nazarene. He urged the crowd to unite and pray for the resolution of the country's problems.

WPD team probes women's 'salvage'

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza has asked the city police chief to form a special team to investigate and solve the series of "salvaging" or summary execution of at least eight women whose bodies were thrown in *esteros* in Quiapo district last year.

Atienza expressed his concern during weekly forum at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Malate.

He said he asked the Western Police District head, Chief Supt. Avelino Razon, to form the probe team. He gave Razon and the team at least one week to come up with results.

He said there might have been a pattern in the killings.

Since last year, the bodies of at least eight women were found floating in Estero de San Miguel and Estero de Quiapo near a pumping station maintained by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

But Razon told reporters that they still faced a blank wall in investigating the deaths, although he admitted the killings appeared to be summary executions.

All victims have not been identified. Most appeared to have been tortured first before being killed.

Seven were either strangled or stabbed; one was chopped to pieces and the body parts placed in a sack.

Policemen theorized that illegal drug syndicates operating in Quiapo could be behind the killings and the women, who might be couriers or agents, could have been victims of liquidation.

Others suggest that a serial killer could be behind the killings. No sign of rape, however, has been found on the women, who were mostly in their late '20s. *Jerome Aning*

P600,000-payroll stolen in Rizal

ANOTHER robbery hit the stinking province of Rizal last week after five holdup men pulled off a daring heist on a main thoroughfare in Cainta and fled with P600,000 in payroll money.

The employees of the Thoccoco Dicasting Corp. Phils. (TDCP) lost their salaries to five unidentified men who stopped the company car and easily intimidated payroll assistant Esther Tiamzon-Chua and driver Zosimo Bernadas Wednesday morning.

Police said the two TDCP representatives had just withdrawn P700,000 from the Bank of Philippine Islands branch at the Cainta Junction on Ortigas Avenue in Barangay Sto. Domingo when they encountered the five men, who were on board a red Toyota Corolla.

The employees said they had noticed the Corolla tailing them shortly after they came from the bank around 10:45 a.m. and boarded the company's L300 van.

Just as the van slowed down while approaching a hump on the road, a man crossed the street directly in front of the TDCP van, prompting Benadas to step on the brakes.

The employees said it was then that the man pointed a handgun at the driver and ordered him to surrender the cash they were carrying. The pedestrian's companions then alighted from the Corolla, which swerved to block the van near the Mapandan Bridge.

In his report, SPO3 Arbe Lasap of the Cainta police said Bernadas freaked out and jumped out of the vehicle, leaving only Chua to face the robbers, who quickly grabbed the brown envelope containing P700,000 in cash from the helpless payroll assistant.

Chua, however, still managed to grab two bundles of cash amounting to P100,000 from the robbers, who fled on board the van. Police later found the van about 200 meters from the TDCP factory on Valley Golf Drive.

No suspects, however, have been arrested. *Blanche S. Rivera*

Robbing passenger stabs taxi driver

A TAXI driver is now in critical condition after he fought off an unidentified robber who stabbed him several times in Sampaloc, Manila Saturday night.

Orlando Dris, 38, of Novaliches, Quezon City, suffered five stab wounds in the body after he refused to yield his money to a robber at about 11:30 p.m. Saturday, investigators said.

The victim is under close observation at the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital in Manila, according to SPO4 Hermino Gonzaga of the Western Police District Station 4.

In his report, case investigator SPO4 Manuel Dy said the unidentified man boarded Dris's CPS Taxi at a still undetermined location minutes before the stabbing.

When the cab reached the corner of Ibarra and Laon-Laan streets in Sampaloc, the passenger pulled out a knife and asked Dris to hand over his earnings, police said.

Dris, who could hardly talk in his hospital bed, told police that when he refused to give his money, the man stabbed him.

Dris tried to ward off the thrusts, but the robber overpowered him and took his earnings.

A barangay councilman saw the bloodied Dris sprawled in the driver's seat and brought him to the hospital. *Christian V. Esguerra*

Helper hangs self

POLICE are investigating why a truck helper hanged himself in his Tondo house Saturday afternoon, two weeks after he was allegedly beaten up by his co-workers.

Members of the Western Police District homicide division are zeroing in on the possibility that a feud with his co-workers led Romeo Flores, 33, of Parola Compound, Tondo, Manila, to kill himself at about 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

Police found out that before the suicide, two co-workers beat up Flores at Novera Trucking during their Christmas party last month.

Three weeks before he committed suicide, Flores didn't report for work, complaining of body pains he apparently sustained from the beating, investigators said.

Flores had been working at Novera Trucking for three years.

Last Saturday, one Chona Pagadum found him hanging in his room with a nylon cord looped around his neck, police said.

Pagadum phoned Flores' father Roperto, who came to bring down his son's body. *Christian V. Esguerra*

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Send your used Fonkard or Touch Card as a raffle entry for a chance to win in the preliminary and grand draws.

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1. A PLDT-branded "Scratch to Riches" scratch card together with any P200, P300 or P500 denominations of PLDT Fonkard Plus and Touch Card in a plastic package at the time of sale, shall be eligible for the Instant Cash promo.
2. Customers simply have to scratch the film on the card to reveal if they have won a cash prize or not. Cash prizes range from P100, P1,000, P10,000, P100,000 and P1,000,000.
3. The promo period shall commence on November 27, 2000 and shall end on January 31, 2001. This promo period shall be announced and published by PLDT.

Claiming of Prizes

1. All cash prizes can be redeemed from any PLDT Business Office and Provincial Exchange, nationwide.
2. Only the winning scratch cards with PLDT-authenticated security codes will be honored. PLDT will verify the authenticity of the winning scratch cards pursuant to its list of security codes. This list is also issued to and deposited with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The DTI representative shall be called to attest the authenticity of the winning scratch card, if necessary. Winners will have to present the winning "Scratch to Riches" scratch card, a valid picture ID (e.g. employee ID, passport or driver's license) to the PLDT Business Office or Provincial Exchange manager. Winners will be given a waiver form which they should accomplish and sign, waiving any further claim they may have from PLDT. The accomplished waiver form should be presented to PLDT upon claiming of the check representing the cash prize The check can be claimed after five (5) working days upon presentation of the winning scratch card and other requirements to the same Business Office or Provincial Exchange.
3. Customers should present their winning scratch cards on or before April 1, 2001. Claims made after this date shall not be honored.
4. Employees of PLDT, its advertising and promo agencies, its suppliers for this particular promotion and participating dealer outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining this promotion and claiming the prizes therefore.
5. PLDT shall shoulder the 20% tax for the winners who have won prizes exceeding P10,000.

RAFFLE DRAW:

1. Consumers will get a chance to win the following:

Preliminary Draw

No. of Winners	Cash Prize	No. of winners per area
4	₱500,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
20	₱10,000	5 in GMA, 5 in Luzon, 5 in Visayas, 5 in Mindanao

Grand Draw

No. of Winners	Cash Prize	No. of winners per area
4	₱1,000,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
4	₱500,000	1 in GMA, 1 in Luzon, 1 in Visayas, 1 in Mindanao
10	₱100,000	4 in GMA, 2 in Luzon, 2 in Visayas, 2 in Mindanao
80	₱10,000	20 in GMA, 20 in Luzon, 20 in Visayas, 20 in Mindanao

2. Enclose a used P200, P300, or P500 denomination, or a combination of two (2) P100 PLDT Fonkard Plus or Touch Card with an expiry date from September 2000 onwards in a white envelope with the customer's name, address, phone no. and signature on it. Drop it in drop boxes placed in PLDT Business Offices, Provincial Exchanges and authorized dealers.
3. There will be two raffle draws: the preliminary draw will be on Jan. 6, 2001, and the grand draw will be on Feb. 10, 2001. Venue and the time of the draws will be submitted to DTI, announced and published in major dailies at a later date. Entries submitted from Nov. 27, 2000 to Dec. 31, 2000 shall qualify for the preliminary draw. Non-winning entries from the preliminary draw automatically qualify for the grand raffle draw, plus all incoming entries till Jan 31, 2001. They will be segregated according to the following locations: Greater Manila Area, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.
4. Winners in the preliminary draw shall automatically be disqualified in the final draw.
5. In cases where the winner's name is drawn more than once within the same raffle date, he will get the prize of higher value. The winner however, shall not be allowed to get both prizes.

Claiming of Prizes:

1. Winners shall be notified via registered mail. All prizes of the winners of the grand raffle draw can be claimed at the PLDT Main Office, 3/F Ramon Cojuangco Bldg. Makati Ave., cor. De La Rosa St., Makati City. In claiming their prizes, winners should present a valid picture ID (e.g. employee ID, passport or driver's license) to the PLDT Marketing Services Department. PLDT shall give them a waiver form that they have to fill up and sign. The accomplished waiver form should be presented to PLDT upon claiming of the check representing the prize. The check can be claimed after five (5) working days upon submission of the requirements to the Marketing Services Department.
2. Winners in the instant cash portion of the promo are still qualified for the raffle draw. Prizes for the raffle draw have to be redeemed within 60 days from the winner's receipt of notification through registered mail. Unclaimed prizes after the said date shall be forfeited with prior approval of DTI.
3. Employees of PLDT, its advertising and promo agencies, its suppliers for this particular promotion and participating dealer outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining this promotion and claiming the prizes therefore.
4. PLDT shall shoulder the 20% tax for the winners who have won prizes exceeding P10,000.

Hurry! Tumawag na nang tumawag for more chances of winning millions!

For more information, call 171, 1-800-888-9090 or visit the PLDT Business Office or Provincial Exchange nearest you. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1227, Series of 2000.

PLDT
convergence@home

www.pldt.com.ph

Composing the garbage and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: Your best friend is becoming more controversial these days. Is it true that she is pregnant?

Guest: Well, it's hard to judge. Private life *niya yon*, so she's entitled. Besides, *may dalawang* two sides in any topic, always.

(Ah, so . . .)

* * *

Host: What is the latest count of fatalities in the fire last night?

Cohost: So far, two. But three houses were not yet included among the fatalities.

(Huh?)

* * *

Host: The economy is supposed to be bad in 2001, but some people are still planning to put up a small business. What is your advice for them so they will succeed despite the problems with the economy?

Guest: Well, for one thing, it's a good factor in business that you have a hands on.

(Uh, thank you, *ha*?)

* * *

Host: What's the latest on the storm? Can you give us an update?

Weatherman: Based on the latest reports, probably next week *gaganda na ang panahon*!

(Probably next week? Thanks for being so scientific!)

* * *

Host: What about *kung tuloy ang pasok sa paaralan, may* announcement *na ba* from DECS?

Weatherman: *Meron na.*

Host: Can we have it?

Weatherman: *Sa mga may pasok sa paaralan, walang pasok ang mga paaralan.*

(Duh . . .)

* * *

Host: *E, yung* floods *naman*?

Weatherman: *Meron pa ring* floods, but only in some lie-lowing areas!

(*Ano daw*?)

* * *

Host: What makes your new shop unique, different from other stores or boutiques?

Guest: *Itong shop na ito, hindi namimili ng edad ng customers.*

(*E di kasi naman*!)

* * *

Host: We have so many problems now, it's sometimes dis-

COMPOSING/ A31

SM CINEMA GUIDE

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NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR 4173868

1 DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
2 DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 DOLBY DIGITAL	THE 6TH DAY
4 DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
5 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	BALAHIBONG PUSA
6 DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
7 DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
8 DOLBY SURROUND	KANGKONG

SM CENTERPOINT 7149522 • 7161416

1 DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
2 DOLBY SURROUND	KANGKONG
3 DTS	MEET THE PARENTS
4 DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
5 DOLBY DIGITAL	THE 6TH DAY
6 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
7 DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
8 DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
9 DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
10 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1 DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2 DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
3 DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
4 DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
5 DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
6 DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
7 DOLBY DIGITAL	THE 6TH DAY
8 DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
9 DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
10 DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
11 DOLBY SURROUND	GATAS
12 DOLBY SURROUND	KANGKONG

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1 DOLBY DIGITAL	MEET THE PARENTS
2 DOLBY DIGITAL	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
3 DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4 DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
5 DOLBY DIGITAL	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
6 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE 6TH DAY
7 DOLBY SURROUND	KANGKONG
8 DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
9 DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
10 DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
11 DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
12 DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1 ULTRA SURROUND	KANGKONG
2 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
3 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6329401

1 DOLBY DIGITAL	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
2 DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3 DOLBY DIGITAL	THE 6TH DAY
4 DTS	MEET THE PARENTS
5 DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
6 DOLBY SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
7 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
8 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
9 DOLBY SURROUND	KANGKONG
10 DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
11 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
12 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	GATAS

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1 DOLBY SURROUND	KANGKONG
2 DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
3 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 DOLBY SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5 DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
6 DOLBY SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER
7 DTS	THE 6TH DAY
8 DOLBY DIGITAL	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
9 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
10 DOLBY SURROUND	GATAS
11 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
12 DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888 • 8066782

1 ULTRA SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
2 ULTRA SURROUND	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
3 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	TANGING YAMAN
4 ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5 ULTRA SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA
6 ULTRA SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
7 ULTRA SURROUND	KANGKONG
8 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE 6TH DAY
9 ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
10 ULTRA SURROUND	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1 ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
2 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
3 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
4 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALAHIBONG PUSA

SM CEBU 2313876

1 DOLBY SURROUND	SUGO NG TONDO
2 ULTRA SURROUND	KANGKONG
3 ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
4 ULTRA SURROUND	GATAS
5 ULTRA SURROUND	LOST SOULS
6 ULTRA SURROUND	EX-CON
7 DOLBY SURROUND	BOYS & GIRLS

SM ILOILO 3209422

1 ULTRA SURROUND	DEATH ROW
2 ULTRA SURROUND	EX- CON
3 ULTRA SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
4 ULTRA SURROUND	GATAS
5 ULTRA SURROUND	BLAIR WITCH 2
6 ULTRA SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
7 ULTRA SURROUND	SUGO.NG TONDO
8 ULTRA SURROUND	LOST SOULS

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE 6TH DAY
3 DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
4 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KANGKONG
5 SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	EX-CON
6 DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN

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GLORIETTA 1 (formerly QUAD)

1	VERTICAL LIMIT (Adv. Screening)
2	LETS & GO TAMIYA
3	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4	THE 6TH DAY

All Digital Sound

GLORIETTA 4

1	THE 6TH DAY in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	
3	VERTICAL LIMIT (Adv. Screening) in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	
4	THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND	
5	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	
6	MEET THE PARENTS in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	
7	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE in DTS DIGITAL SOUND	

Art Film

GREENBELT CINEMAS

1	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2	VERTICAL LIMIT (Adv. Screening) in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	BALAHIBONG PUSA in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4	SOON TO OPEN Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	VERTICAL LIMIT (Adv. Screening) in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	MEET THE PARENTS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	THE 6TH DAY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	BALAHIBONG PUSA in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Filinvest

FESTIVAL CINEMA

(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (SDDS)	THE 6TH DAY
2 (SDDS)	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
3 (DTS)	MEET THE PARENTS
4 (DOLB DTS)	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
5 (DOLB DOLBY)	TANGING YAMAN
6 (DOLB SDDS)	SPIRIT WARRIORS
7 (DOLB DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
8 (DOLBY)	KANGKONG
9 (DOLBY)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
10 (DOLBY)	BALAHIBONG PUSA

Pearl Plaza Cinemas (Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	GATAS
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 (DTS)	KANGKONG
4	VERTICAL LIMIT
5	RESERVE
6 (DTS)	THE 6TH DAY

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3 (Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
2 (DTS)	DEATH ROW
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Masagana CINEMA (Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	GATAS
3	KANGKONG

starmall Movies (Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	KANGKONG
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE 6TH DAY
5	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP

Metropolis (Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RESERVE
2	KANGKONG
3	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4	TANGING YAMAN
5	VERTICAL LIMIT
6	THE 6TH DAY
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS
8	LETS GO TAMIYA

Uniwide Metromall (Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074

1	TATLONG PUSO ISANG PANGARAP
2	HOT SPOT
3	LABAN KUNG LABAN
4	
5	WATCH 3 MOVIES FOR ONLY P30.00
6	

Uniwide Coastal Mall (Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152

1	WATCH 3 MOVIES FOR ONLY P30.00
2	ARMOUR OF GOD
3	FIRST STRIKE
4	WHO AM I (Jacky Chan Festival)

Center Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	TANGING YAMAN
2	PING LACSON STORY

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC. tel 930.9515

1	KANGKONG
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3	VERTICAL LIMIT

Spring (Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
A	KANGKONG

JC Cinema (Parañaque) tel 825.8626

1	GATAS
3	KANGKONG

GOTESCO CINEMA

City (Manila) tel 734.8568

1 (DOLBY)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	GATAS
3	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
4	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
5	TANGING YAMAN
6	KANGKONG
7 (DTS)	MEET THE PARENTS
8 (SDDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
9 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY

Caloocan tel 362.3508

2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3	KANGKONG
4	LETS GO TAMIYA
5	
6	

Grand Central (Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3	TANGING YAMAN
4 (SDDS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
5	KANGKONG
6 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
7 (DTS)	SPIRIT WARRIORS
8	PING LACSON STORY
9	GATAS

Commonwealth tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
3	TANGING YAMAN
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS
5 (SDDS)	THE 6TH DAY
6	BALAHIBONG PUSA
7 (DOLBY)	VERTICAL LIMIT
8	KANGKONG

Ortigas tel 656.6795

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	TANGING YAMAN
3 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5 (SDDS)	THE 6TH DAY
6 (DOLBY)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
7 (DOLBY)	KANGKONG

Universal (Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA

Sampaguita (Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA

Dilson (Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson Lords Jennet — HOT SPOT

MARKETHAUS Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	KANGKONG
2	BALAHIBONG PUSO
3	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
4	VERTICAL LIMIT

Prima (Pasig) tel 641.1215

1	
3	KANGKONG

Super Cinerama (Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238

1	THE 6TH DAY
2	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
4	BALAHIBONG PUSA
5	KANGKONG

Divisoria Mall (Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	KANGKONG
3	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4	THE 6TH DAY
5	PING LACSON STORY
6	VERTICAL LIMIT

Baclaran LRT Cinema tel 512.0115 or 512.0116

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	KANGKONG
3	THE 6TH DAY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall (Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	KANGKONG
3 (DTS)	THE 6TH DAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 (DTS)	TANGING YAMAN
3 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
4	KANGKONG

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	THE 6TH DAY
2	LETS GO TAMIYA
3	KANGKONG
4 (DTS)	BALAHIBONG PUSA

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3 (DTS)	KANGKONG
4	CRACKER JACK
5	GATAS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	KANGKONG
3	TANGING YAMAN

Olivarez Los Baños tel (049) 536.5101

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2	GATAS
3	TANGING YAMAN

Olivarez Tagaytay tel (046) 413.0311

1	TANGING YAMAN
2	THE 6TH DAY
3	GATAS

Morales Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	DEATH ROW
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS
3	TANGING YAMAN

Sunshine (FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	THE 6TH DAY
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3	KANGKONG
4	VERTICAL LIMIT

Cabuyao (Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783

1 (DTS)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
2 (SDDS)	KANGKONG

Fourstep (Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	BALAHIBONG PUSA

Emperor (Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	TANGING YAMAN
2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
3	THE 6TH DAY

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	TANGING YAMAN
2	GATAS
3	UNBREAKABLE
4	THE 6TH DAY

Berma tel 879.2168

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

CitiMall (Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	KANGKONG
3	TANGING YAMAN
4	THE 6TH DAY

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	THE 6TH DAY
2	TANGING YAMAN
3	BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 (DTS EX)	MEET THE PARENTS

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ERMITA 536-7809-14

1. TANGING YAMAN
2. THE 6TH DAY
3. BALAHIBONG PUSA
4. KANGKONG
5. LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
6. BALAHIBONG PUSA
7. MEET THE PARENTS

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1. THE 6TH DAY
2. GATAS
3. TANGING YAMAN
4. PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
5. KANGKONG
6. BALAHIBONG PUSA

BACOLOD (034)441-0453

1. THE 6TH DAY
2. TANGING YAMAN
3. BLAIR WITCH 2
4. DEATH ROW
5. MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
6. SUGATANG PUSO

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	TANGING YAMAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (SDDS)	MEET THE PARENTS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	THE 6TH DAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	KANGKONG
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	BALAHIBONG PUSA
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	BALAHIBONG PUSA
MIRAMAR	KANGKONG
ODEON	BALAHIBONG PUSA
ODEON-2	THE 6TH DAY
ROBEN	KANGKONG
TANDEM-1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
TANDEM-2	NAGHUHUMIYAW
TIMES	WHAT LIES BENEATH / ANACONDA 2000

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SA ITO ANG SAKAP SA ITO ANG LIGAYA
ACT-2	ARAYY
ACT-3	HIRAM NA KATAWAN
ACT-4	BIRADOR
CORONET-2	BALAHIBONG PUSA
QUEZON-1	KANGKONG
REMAR	BALAHIBONG PUSA
REMAR-2	KANGKONG

CUBAO

OCEAN SUPERAMA	MARKOVA COMFORT GAY
OCEAN CINEMA-A	LARO SA BAGA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	GUEVARRA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-2	THE 6TH DAY

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KANGKONG
CINEMA-2	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
CINEMA-3	DEATH ROW
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-6	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-7	SPIRIT WARRIORS
CINEMA-8	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MEET THE PARENTS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PREDATOR FROM THE DEEP
CINEMA-12	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-14	GATAS
CINEMA-15	TANGING YAMAN

LORES

CINEMA-2	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-3	THE 6TH DAY

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	TANGING YAMAN
CINEMA-2	LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE
CINEMA-3	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-4	BALAHIBONG PUSA
CINEMA-5	THE 6TH DAY
CINEMA-6	MEET THE PARENTS

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(PG-13)

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Ben Stiller

Teri Polo

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Reacting to readers' reactions, and to Rica's breast exposure

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

I'VE read some of your snail mail and e-mail (the good, the bad, the constructive and the spiteful), and my heart has been touched tremendously. All your opinions have been duly noted. And here's my action brought about by your reactions.

I love food, I love to eat out, and you seem to value my opinion regarding restaurants. I'm sure it has a lot to do with the fact that I'm *malusog*. If I were thin, it would be hard to believe that I eat.

There are two places in the Katipunan-Libis area which I'm currently very enamored with.

The first is Kulinarya which I discovered while having my hair cut and colored by **Pin Antonio** in her Salon de Manila, Katipunan branch. Kulinarya is along the stretch of Katipunan in front of Blue Ridge. The place is cozy, and I must confess that I have eaten their food three times, delivered to the salon, and I've actually only eaten inside Kulinarya once early evening last Thursday.

What do I recommend? They have excellent pasta dishes. I've tried their carbonara, which is delicious without being *nakakaumay* or cloying, and their puttanesca, which is the best I've ever had. The sauce is generous with its ingredients of two kinds of olives (the green and the black, both of which I can tolerate, but don't really like), capers (again it falls into the tolerable category), anchovies (yummy!), chunks of tomatoes (heavenly!), and real parmesan cheese slivers.

Apart from the pasta, Kulinarya has very good bread. And, as I've mentioned many times in the past, I'm obsessed with iced tea, as this is the beverage I have most often. Their iced tea ranks among my top three favorites (California Pizza Kitchen and Manila Hotel's are my other two favorites). It's very refreshing, with the right blend of distinct tea flavor, sweetness and a slight fruity accent.

One of the best Filipino desserts or merienda fare in my opinion is *turon-saging* with *langka*. Kulinarya has a high-end version which is worth every single one of its gazillion calories. Super-duper *sarap*!

The second restaurant that I've been frequenting—I've actually been there on an almost weekly basis—is Metro Café on Libis restaurant row. It's near Burger King and on the second floor of a building that also houses an RCBC Bank branch.

Metro Café is very clean to the eyes. The interiors are done in white and dark brown wood. Simple and pleasing, very much like their cuisine.

I don't know if you're like me, but when it comes to food, I like what I know. If there are certain dishes in a restaurant that I've tried and enjoyed, then I'll keep ordering them over and over again.

In Metro Café, I've been consistently ordering their spring rolls with cucumber sauce as an appetizer, beef *kaldereta* and/or *kare kare* for the main course. The spring rolls are crispy, the filling has ground meat (probably pork) and *sotanghon* noodles. The sauce is a sweet syrupy and spicy blend with thinly sliced cucumber. And for me, it's what makes the dish special.

I love *kare-kare*, I can even whip it up myself. My mom's cook does it very well, too, and Metro Café's version is just as delicious as ours. I just wish they'd put *pechay*, because this is my favorite vegetable in *kare-kare*.

Their most note-worthy dish is their beef *kaldereta*. The beef is tender, and the sauce is thick, flavorful and just spicy enough without the diner needing to gulp down a glass of water after each bite.

The people who ate with me (my headwriter, producers, and make-up artists for "Today with Kris Aquino") loved the crispy fish. I'm really not a fish-eater, I'm a meat lover, except for *daing na bangus*, spanish sardines, *lapu-lapu*, *tuyo* and tuna.

Since the fish wasn't one of these, I didn't have it, but they kept raving about the crispness and freshness of the fish. They even commented that the restaurant must use high-quality oil for frying because there was no unpleasant oily taste that is sometimes present in some deep-fried restaurant dishes.

Let me just make note of the fact that both places are fairly priced and really give good value for your money. Happy eating!

* * *

I caught "Balahibong Pusa" on its second day of screening. I watched the last full show at Glorietta I cinemas (the old Quad).

My curiosity comes from the fact that **Rica Peralejo**, while she was still in ABS-CBN, was one of the most consistently cooperative guests on my daily program. Rica celebrated her debut, first admitted her relationship with **Bojo Molina**, discussed their parting of ways, announced their reconciliation and analyzed the reasons behind it, and finally expressed her decision to move on and go daring—all within my two programs "Today with Kris Aquino" and "The Buzz."

In other words, she has matured before my very eyes, and in her manner of answering my inquisitiveness on and off the TV screen. To this day, she still calls me "Ate Kris." She has always been sweet to me, and I wanted to see the results of her decision to bare.

While I was buying tickets, the woman behind the ticket counter bluntly asked me, "*Bakit naman ginawa'yun ni* Rica? *Bakit nag*-bold *na siya?*

Nakakahinayang naman."

I asked her if the movie was doing well, and she said it was a big hit. I told her we weren't in any position to judge Rica and at least her film is a box office hit!

Yes, there is breast exposure. An ample view from **Joyce Jimenez** and shockingly enough from Rica.

The story has been told before, but the cinemalography is very real and extremely impressive. The music heightens the passion of the sex scenes, as well as the emotions of the confrontation scenes.

Rica acquits herself as an actress. She is very consistent in her portrayal of a wild, party girl. Her last scene with her father (played by **Julio Diaz**) is unexpected, subtle in execution but powerful in explaining the actions of both father and daughter.

Rica is young and talented. In an ideal world, she wouldn't have needed to bare her body (in "Balahibong Pusa," the upper half of her body). Then again, **Drew Barrymore** had to go through a similar route before she became the family-friendly "Angel" and successful producer she has evolved into.

That is my wish for Rica, that this may just be a stepping stone and a way to open the doors for what may ultimately become a noteworthy and respected acting career.

Composing . . .

(From page A30)

couraging and confusing.. How do you handle problems in your own life, to avoid getting confused?

Guest: When one problem comes after another, just cross the bridge to come to it!

(Wheeee!)

* * *

Host: Is it true that your boyfriend is a non-show biz businessman?

Starlet: *Ha? Sino'ng nagsabi sa 'yo?*

Host: And is it true *na nagli*-live-in *na kayo sa isang* condo *sa* Makati *ngayon*?

Starlet: *Huwag na lang*, it's for my privates *na lang, puwede?*

(*Talagang* for your privates!)

* * *

Host: What do you do to relax, to get rid of stress?

Guest: I climb a mountain—or have the taste of the good life in its foot!

(Huh?!)

* * *

Host: What don't you like to hear about yourself?

Guest: What *ba*?—Oh, *hate ko talaga* when people say *na mataba ako*. I'm not fat, I'm volumptous *lang naman, di ba*?

(Volumptous? *Hmp, sige na nga . . .*)

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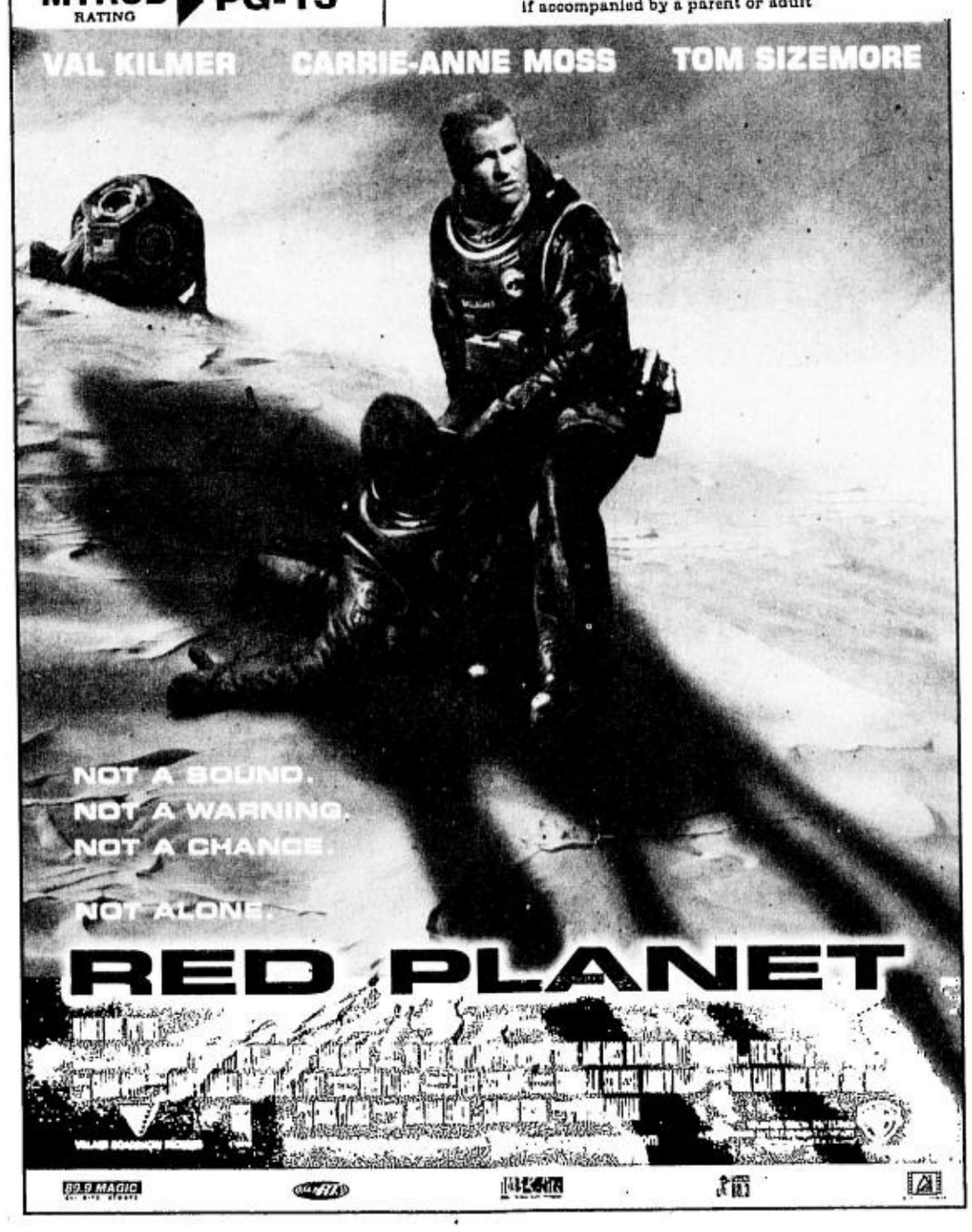

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BALAHIBONG PUSA 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	THE 6TH DAY 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 5:50, 7:10, 9:40	MEET THE PARENTS 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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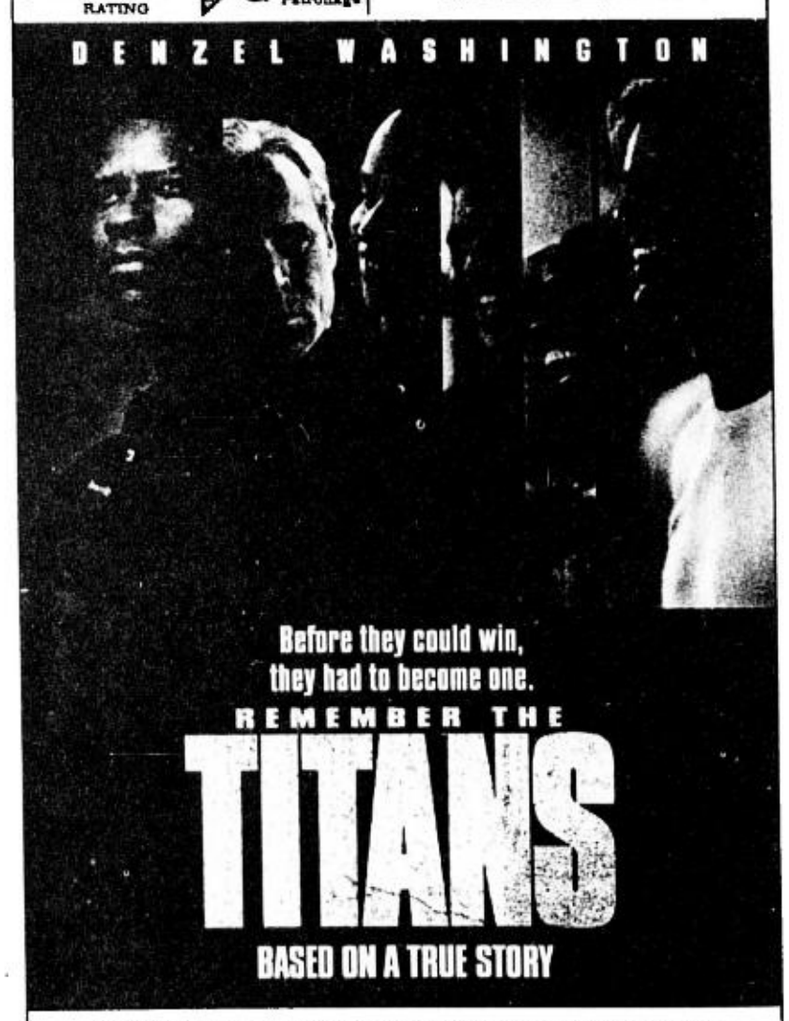

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Gov't eyes P40-B budget cut

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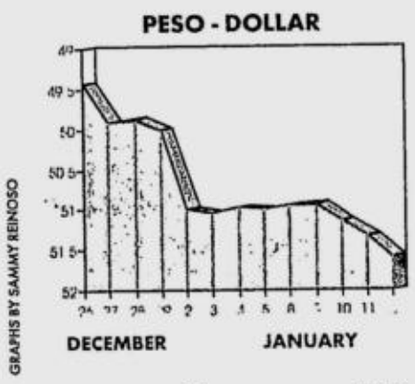


GRAPHS BY SAMMY REINOSO

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱51.59 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 12, 2001

¥118.16 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 118.16 as of 5 p.m., Jan. 12, 2001

GOLD:$264.20/264.70
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 12, 2001

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE ESTRADA administration is looking at a P40-billion cut in its budget this year to P685 billion in order to contain a budget deficit that it expects to top P130 billion by year's end.

Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla said that higher interest rates, a weakening peso and a worst-case revenue collection could lead to a budget gap this year of P130 billion or even higher.

Last year, the budget deficit soared to a little less than P140 billion, according to Finance Secretary Jose T. Pardo. He said this year's deficit should be less than that.

"The deficit this year could range from P125 billion to P130 billion. However, if we optimize revenue, then no doubt the deficit will even be lower than that," Pardo said.

The economic team earlier planned to impose a budget cut of P10 billion and to contain the budget deficit at P85 billion.

Since the deficit had ballooned to uncontrollable levels, the economic team would prioritize bringing down the budget gap rather than pump-prime the economy.

"We are very serious in reining in the deficit and it is wiser at this time to focus on the deficit. Anyway, a 3-percent GDP growth is fairly easy to achieve," Medalla said.

Economists like Romulo Neri of the Congressional Planning and Budget Office, however, said a P40-billion cut in this year's budget would amount to an "economic suicide."

Medalla said the cuts, comprised of soft and hard cuts, would be evenly distributed between the two semesters. He said if revenue targets were not met in the first half, then the P20 billion in cuts would not be restored in the budget.

This goes as well for the second half, he said.

The government is also counting on getting its hands on P28 billion of Marcos wealth that it would use to help bring down the level of the budget deficit.

The Cabinet-level Development Budget Coordinating Council has also adjusted to a more realistic target of P47-to-$1 the peso-dollar assumption this year from an earlier target of P44.50 to a dollar.

Full-year revenue target this year was reduced to P610.9 from P620.6 billion with the Bureau of Internal Revenue committing to raise P427.2 billion while privatization proceeds were seen at a modest P7 billion.

Other highlights of the 2001 targets included a 3.7-percent growth in GNP, 3.5-percent growth in GDP, a 6-percent inflation rate, a 10.1-percent growth in exports, 5.5-percent rise in imports, a crude oil price average of $24.25 per barrel, a London interbank offered rate or Libor of 7.4 percent, and a 91-day treasury bill rate of 11 percent.

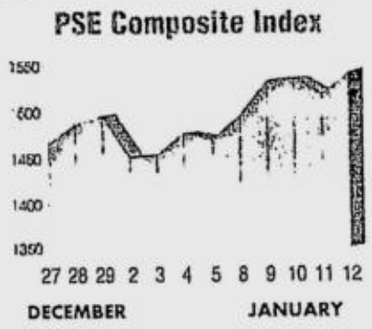
The Estrada administration has also given up on its target to achieve a balanced budget by 2003. The more realistic period in achieving a balanced budget would be two years later or by 2005.

STOCK MARKET

Stocks seen to rise

THE LOCAL stock market is expected to see some follow-through bargain-hunting on selective stocks this week as investors take position ahead of the Feb. 12 conclusion of the impeachment trial of President Estrada.

The unexpected rally last week, which market players attributed to the buying spree of government financial institutions, surprised most traders who nonetheless saw it as a cue of a possible turnaround in the market.



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Analysts said that the stock market was still bound to nse this week based on technical analysis.

The Phisix breached several technical resistance levels and closed at 1,541.65 on Friday, up by 72.57 points week-on-week from 1,469.08.

Gov't banks ready P5-B loan fund for SMEs

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

GOVERNMENT financial institutions have agreed to put up a P5-billion loan facility for the working capital requirements of small and medium enterprises whose access to credit has tightened significantly in the past years due to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' merger policy, which unduly depleted the ranks mid-sized banks.

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Miguel Varela said the Land Bank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines have already agreed to chip in to the P5-billion loan facility, which would provide more reasonable terms on interest rates and collateral requirements. Varela said he expected other GFIs to contribute to the fund.

PCCI vice president Donald Dee said their members have been clamoring for a special lending facility to fill in the financing void caused by the dearth in mid-sized banks.

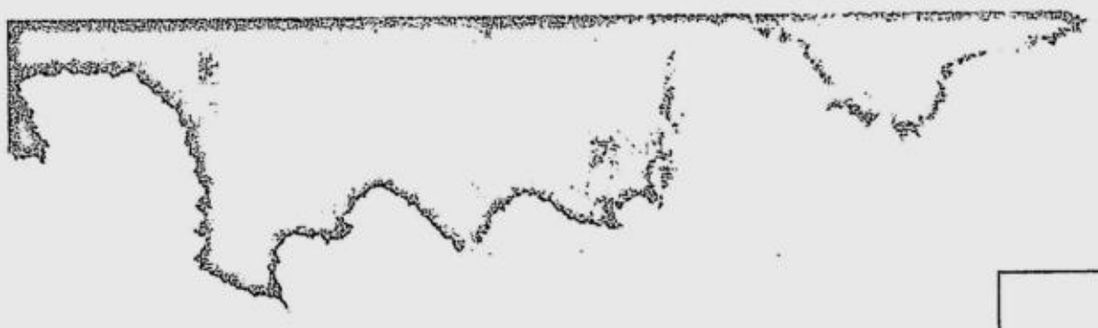
"SMEs could not borrow money because the former mid-sized banks have since become bigger from mergers and have changed their client base from SMEs to the top 1,000 corporations," Dee said.

Dee cited the mid-sized banks as PCI Bank and Equitable Banking Corp., Solid Banking Corp. (which was taken over by Metropolitan Banking and Trust Co.), and Far East Bank and Trust Co. (taken over by Bank of the Philippine Islands). "The BSP did not realize that mid-sized banks serve a special group of borrowers that are not catered to by the big banks," Dee said. He said the big banks cater mostly to those who need more than P200 million but only a few were willing to consider loans of P10 million to P20 million.

A study commissioned by the Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. blamed the lack of credit access for the poor performance of the non-electronics sector, particularly SME exporters who rely on financing to buy raw materials and fulfill their export orders.

In contrast, electronic exporters are normally multinational corporations that enjoy wide access to financing and operate on a consignment basis. The study said banks were lending less to exporters not because these were unprofitable or not viable but because these were

GOV'T/ B3



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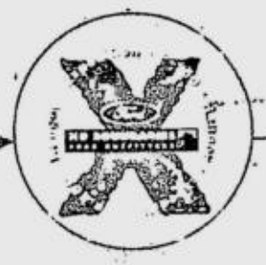

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RP needs to pursue more trade pacts with non-Asean countries

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

SHOULD the Philippines follow the lead of Singapore in forging bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with non-Asean countries in order to get a bigger share of exports and investments from the United States and Europe?

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry vice president Donald Dee said FTAs have become a viable option for developing countries especially with the emergence of free trade blocks in the United States and Europe.

With the trend toward trade liberalization, Dee said tariff barriers have become obsolete and while fiscal incentives have become the only weapon of countries in luring investors. However, Dee said that no amount of incentives would make up for the lack of a market to sell the country's goods that can be addressed by bilateral pacts.

Dee cited the case of Mexico which benefited tremendously with the North American Free Trade Agreement which gives it free access to the biggest markets in the world for garments.

Dee said Mexico has cornered 16 percent of the lucrative T-shirt market in the United States from virtually nil prior to Nafta because it does not pay tariff while non-Nafta members have to pay 17 percent in duties.

He said that with the elimination of quotas by 2004, which allows the Philippines to sell a fixed amount of garments to the United States and Europe, it would be difficult for the country to compete with those that are either members of the trading blocks in these regions or those who have FTAs with key members.

Dee said the Philippines should emulate Singapore, which has signed FTAs with New Zealand and Japan and is planning to ink similar deals with Canada, Australia, India and Mexico.

Singapore's lead to initiated FTAs with non-Asean countries, however, has received sharp criticism from its peers in Asean particularly Malaysia, which warned that this would weaken the region's own free trading block the Asean Free Trade Area (Afta)Z in 2004.

Malaysia is concerned that Singapore's FTA partners might use the city-state as a gateway to Afta. It reckoned that FTAs should be made as an Asean undertaking rather than individual effort in order not to weaken the Afta initiative.

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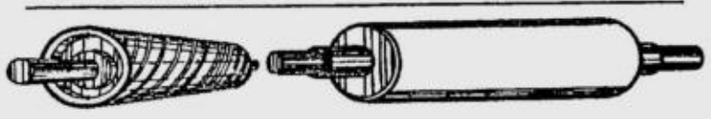

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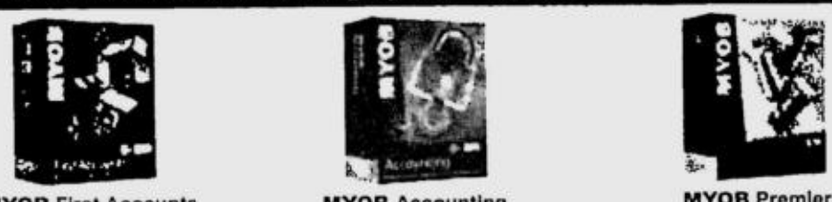

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GOINGS-ON

LBC's 57th branch in US

SINCE its providential entry into the United States with its first branch in the Flood Building in San Francisco in 1986, LBC has continued to reinforce its presence in areas where the critical mass of Filipinos resides.

The latest branch to open is in Virginia Beach, California, marking the 57th LBC branch in the United States (there are 23 in California alone). LBC is also in North America, Hawaii and Saipan.

Customers belong to the first and second generations of Filipinos in the mid-thirties-and-above age group who regularly send either money remittances or *balikbayan* boxes to their families in the Philippines.

Ninety-nine percent of LBC's employees in the United States are Filipinos who remain in the company for as long as eight to 10 years. In the next three to five years, LBC plans to further expand in the United States, particularly the East Coast.

Oracle names distributor

TO EXPAND its market in the small and medium enterprise sector, Oracle Philippines has named MSI Digiland (Phils.) Inc. as its first Value Added Distributor (VAD) in the country.

VADs are partner distributors that have been accredited to sell and deliver information technology services using Oracle iPlatform products through their distribution channels. VADs are expected to enhance sales by fully integrating the selling, solutions support and logistics functions of their network of resellers.

The partnership builds on Oracle's strategy to allow its local business partners to fulfill all deals for the company's core technology products. "The use of VADs is an important element in Oracle's indirect distribution strategy. They assist Oracle in the management and recruitment of Oracle Alliance Members. They are tightly integrated with the local sales model mainly as a means to help drive sales and gain market share," said Bernard Yu, Oracle's managing director.

PAL helps boost Cebu tourism

THE CEBU tourism industry and the Philippine Airlines have joined hands to ensure increased tourist arrivals during two major events the city will host later this month—the Sinulog festival on Jan. 21 and the Lunar New Year's Day on Jan. 24.

Cebu's tourism and business sectors have lined up special activities, tour packages and discounts to entice tourists to spend the holidays here

Meanwhile, PAL has announced the addition of a fifth weekly frequency to its popular Cebu-Hong Kong flights on selected days during the Chinese New Year break.

The atrocious cost of medicine

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

SOMETIME ago, my wife and I went to a hospital to visit our kumareng Lily who was confined for some illness or other. As we entered her room, I saw Lily sitting on a chair. Her husband, Bob, was lying on the bed.

"Hey, Bob," I said, "I thought Lily was the patient. What are you lying on the bed for?"

Bob answered, only half kidding, "The nurse has just shown me the hospital bill."

This incident came back to me as I paid the hospital bill on my wife's recent confinement at Medical City. Pharmacy (this is the total of all medicine drawn from the hospital drug store) accounted for 45 percent of the bill.

One of the pharmacy items had to be administered continuously on my wife at home. At the hospital, the item cost P205. I asked my daughter Clarissa, an anesthesiologist at the Ospital ng Makati, to canvass the market. The supplier of Medical City quoted a wholesale price of P168. She found a supplier who quoted—are you ready?—P36 wholesale. The second supplier's item was slightly different from the item of the first supplier. But the difference, I felt, did not justify the much higher price.

This marketing exercise bares the atrocious cost of medicine. First, there is the hospital's markup. This is similar to the auto repair shop's markup on spare parts purchased by the shop. This markup by the hospital or auto repair shop is acceptable as the patient or the car owner does not have to go out to purchase the items needed. The difference is that the owner may be able to afford waiting for the repair of his car, while the patient may be hovering between life and death.

On the above item, Medical City's markup was a tolerable 22 percent over the wholesale price. But some hospitals really soak the patient. First, the markup is as much as 50 percent or even more over the retail price. The nurses seem to be under instructions to fill straight away the attending physician's prescriptions from the hospital drug store. As soon as the medicine arrives at the nurses' station, the box is opened and the medicine is considered sold. If the patient brings in his own medicine, [illegible] hospitals will charge [illegible] kage.

I think [illegible] Department of Health should [illegible] stop hospitals once and [illegible] gouging the patient. Maybe Congress should write up a Magna Carta for hospital patients.

Even if you do not get confined in a hospital, but you carry a medical insurance policy of some kind, the atrocious cost of medicine will affect you. The next time you renew your policy, the premium may be higher.

The huge difference between the wholesale prices of the two suppliers proves that the patient can save a lot of money by canvassing the market, assuming he has the luxury of time. But when you are in a hospital, there is no time to canvass the market. The hospital literally holds the patient captive.

I have found out that if you live in the suburbs of Manila and you have to buy enough medicine to justify the trip, the drugstores in Bambang Street in Manila can give you a huge bargain. It is like buying your auto repair parts from the shops on Banawe Street in Quezon City, or hunting for bargains in the dry goods stores in Divisoria.

Another way of saving money on medicine is to order it from a relative in the States. I am lucky that my third son Gerry is an internist in Los Angeles. He regularly sends me my cholesterol and blood pressure pills. If enough OFWs do this, local prices should come down.

But, in the long term, the surest way to bring down prices is to open the market to foreign competition. Former Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas opened the door by starting the program of importing medicines from India. The volume is still small to make a noticeable dent on local prices. Besides, competition from government flies against all rules of free enterprise.

Protectionism has long been discredited because it is not the entrepreneur that pays for the protection. Rather, it is the Filipino consumer that pays for that protection by way of higher prices. The Filipino consumer is not the one being protected, why should he pay for that protection?

Japan commits ₱600M for computer project

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry said that Japan has formally committed to approve P600 million for the purchase and distri- [illegible] .000 [illegible] puters and equipment to identified 1,000 public high school- [illegible] roughout the Philippine [illegible] under the Personal Computers for Public High Schools Project.

The grant-in-aid seeks to raise the computer literacy of high school teachers and [illegible] ts, according to acting Trade and Industry Secretary Thom[illegible]

With access to computers and information technology, the students will gain basic proficiency leading to their participation in the growing opportunities for employment and business in the global marketplace, Aquino said.

Japan's commitment was relayed to Finance Secretary Jose T. Pardo by Japanese Ambassador Yoshihisa Ara in a letter dated Dec. 28, 2000.

The PCs for Public High Schools Project was prepared by a task force led by then Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas and now by Secretary Aquino. The participating private sector group is led by former Senator Vicente T. Paterno.

In his letter to Pardo, Ambassador Ara said that Japan "will approve the utilization of P600 million from the counterpart fund of its non-project grant aid (NPGA) scheme for fiscal years 1993 and 1997."

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CEBU A.S. Fortuna Ave., Mandaue City, Cebu. Tel: [032] 344-9538/ [032] 344-8943.

Asiamoney cites Sy's SM Prime

ASIAMONEY, in its December 2000-January 2001 issue, named SM Prime Holdings Inc. the best-managed company in the Philippines for last year. It is the third time in the last four years that SM Prime, the premier Philippine shopping mall chain headed by its chair and president Henry Sy, got the award. Among all companies in Asia-Pacific, SM Prime ranked third.

Asiamoney's article, "The Champions of Asian Business," acknowledged the familiar names in the best-managed companies' poll as "the greats of Asian business who didn't get where they are for nothing."

Respondents to the annual worldwide poll voted SM Prime the best in corporate strategy, management of financial accounts, accuracy of forecasts and treatment of minority stockholders. Respondents consisted of fund managers, chief investment officers, and heads of research of fund management firms and brokerage houses in Asia-Pacific, including Australia and Japan, Europe and the US.

This series on Philippine banking history is published in the business section of the **Philippine Daily Inquirer**, in commemoration of the 150th year of the **Bank of the Philippine Islands** (BPI), formerly El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel 2 (The Spanish Filipino Bank of Isabel II), the first bank to be established in teh Philippines and Southeast Asia. ADVT

PHILIPPINE BANKING

Did you know?

...that if King Ferdinand VII, the father of Isabella II, did not abolish the Salic Law (which forbade the succession of a woman to the throne), the next Spanish ruler would have been his brother, Carlos, and *El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel* 2 might have been named after him instead?

...that Isabella II was only 3 years old when she inherited the Spanish throne following the death of her father in 1833?

...that Queen Isabella II was only 21 years old when the first bank in the Philippines (and Southeast Asia) was established and named after her in 1851?

...that the name of the bank was eventually shortened to *El Banco Español Filipino* effective September 3, 1869 after the dethronement of Isabella II as queen of Spain in 1868?

150

Gov't banks ready ₱5-B loan fund for SMEs

(From page B1)

small, lack quality assets for collateral and lack a reputable name.

Dee said financing has become even more important for exporters because their buyers spurn the issuance of letters of credit that were previously used in accessing loans from banks.

The PCCI has asked the BSP to discontinue its policy of encouraging mergers and consolidation in the industry because of its harsh impact on SME lending.

But while it criticized the BSP's merger policy, the PCCI cheered BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura's decision to keep interest rates low despite the rising pressure on the peso.

Dee said that given a choice between lower interest rates and stable foreign exchange rates, businessmen would prefer the former because interest rates affect everybody. He noted that prices of commodities have remained fairly stable from 1997 to 2000 even though the peso had lost half of its value during the period. "This shows that manufacturers would always keep prices at levels affordable to consumers," Dee said.

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Ms. Helen Sia
Svenson Manager

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Q. What can Svenson do about a bald spot?
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SuperStar Virgo is the newest and largest mega-ship in the Asia-Pacific region. The pride and joy of Star Cruises, it can accommodate up to 2,000 passengers, and has a variety of facilities for non-stop entertainment, dining, sports and business activities. The luxury liner features 16 restaurants and food outlets, gym and spa, swimming pools, fun and game arcades, discos, state-of-the art cinema, auditorium, library and a modern business center.

On the other hand, those who want to simply enjoy the Lion City can take advantage of the four-day/three-night Singapore Package at $799 for two. The package includes roundtrip Manila-Singapore economy airfare on Singapore Airlines, hotel accommodation, daily breakfasts, roundtrip airport/hotel transfers, and a choice of three of the following: the City Experience Tour, Singapore River Boat Tour, and admissions to the Singapore Zoological Gardens, Night Safari, Jurong Bird Park, Underwater World (Sentosa) and Images of Singapore (also in Sentosa). The first 300 passengers of this package can claim a free limited edition Swatch watch.

Singapore Airlines is a consistent recipient of many industry and travel awards, including Conde Nast Traveler's Best International Airline award in 11 out of the last 12 years. SIA's economy class also offers passengers first-class perks such as free-flowing champagne, a wide selection of gourmet meals, and a state-of-the-art inflight entertainment and communication system.

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₱25B IN EMERGENCY LOAN

BSP, PDIC criticized for lending to PNB

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

FORMER Central Bank governor Jose Cuisia lambasted Friday the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. for extending a combined P25-billion loan to Philippine National Bank.

Because of its financial woes, PNB was not able to pay the loan on time last week forcing both the BSP and PDIC to extend the emergency financial assistance by 90 days.

The bank, which is now more than 70-percent owned by taipan Lucio Tan, is now asking the government to convert the emergency loan into a long-term facility as part of its rehabilitation package.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Cuisia said the loan to PNB had put the government in a bad position. He said that if the bank were to emerge a better bank in the next two to three years, it would be the private shareholders that would benefit the most but if the bank's financial position were to worsen, it would be the government that would absorb the biggest risk.

Once the bank recovered, the government could sell its stake at a good price, he pointed out.

"At least, the government should have exacted from the private shareholders a bigger percentage of the equity (of PNB)," Cuisia said. "The government should get a corresponding adjustment in its equity holdings because it paid the bail-out money."

The former CB chief estimated that the government could have taken control of the bank if the P25 billion had been translated into an equity interest.

He said that instead of extending a loan, the government could have explored the equity concept and used a government-controlled corporation or vehicle like the National Development Corp. to take a stake in the bank in exchange for the bail-out funds.

The government's stake in PNB dwindled to 16 percent after the bank's stock rights offering last September

At this time, Cuisia said, he believed that the government would have "no choice," but to restructure the P25 billion in emergency assistance, which was designed only to be a short-term loan. "PNB cannot pay that loan," Cuisia said.

Cuisia also questioned PDIC's move to lend funds when its role was to provide deposit insurance. "What will happen to banks that might later turn to PDIC for funding?" he asked.

He also questioned the kind of collateral that the government had secured to back up the P25-billion loan. He said that, as in the past, the BSP had refused to disclose to the public what have been the specific and actual collateral that were used to back the emergency loan.

The government earlier granted emergency assistance to PNB when the bank reportedly experienced heavy withdrawals due to uncertainties over Tan's acquisition of government's 30-percent stake in the bank earlier.

EasyCall subscriber base shrinking

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

THE SUBSCRIBER base of EasyCall Communications Philippines Inc., the country's biggest paging service provider, continued to slide to 70,000 as of end-2000 from more than 100,000 six months earlier.

This, according to EasyCall officials, can be attributed to the growing number of people shifting to cellular phones, which feature "text messaging" services that directly rival the services offered by paging companies.

However, EasyCall executive vice president Edgardo T. Abalos said the company would never give up its paging business.

"We believe that there is still a niche market for paging," he said.

At the height of its popularity, the pager was viewed as an effective productivity and marketing tool. With the advent of the cellular phone, Abalos said the pager have become more appropriate for the corporate market.

Doctors, salesmen and other people working in the field would find the pagers more convenient and economical to use, Abalos said.

Meanwhile, the company plans to spend some P80 million for the expansion of its call center and data center businesses in the first half of 2001.

Abalos said the company expected growth to come from these businesses and that the additional investments would enable the company to accommodate more clients.

"This year is going to be a better year for our call center and data center," said Abalos, despite his projection that the company will have a net loss for the fiscal year ending June 2001.

He said EasyCall expected its investments to start paying off next year.

Last year, EasyCall invested about P200 million for its new Internet and data service, that followed its diversification into the call center business a year earlier. It was also last year that EasyCall transformed itself into an Internet service provider in the light of the slowdown in the paging business.

Abalos said the company had decided to focus on the corporate market first before making available its ISP service to the consumer market.

EasyCall, however, would not refuse individuals who would want to avail themselves of the company's Internet services.

For the call center business, EasyCall will invest approximately $1 million, or some P50 million at the current exchange rate.

With the aid of computers, call centers can give consumers most of the information they need about the products they are interested in or answer frequently asked questions. Call centers can also help their clients build databases on the profiles of their customers.

Abalos said that the $1 million would be used to expand the capacity of its call center by 100 to 200 seats. Seats are manned computer stations where the calls are handled. EasyCall currently has 130 seats for its call center.

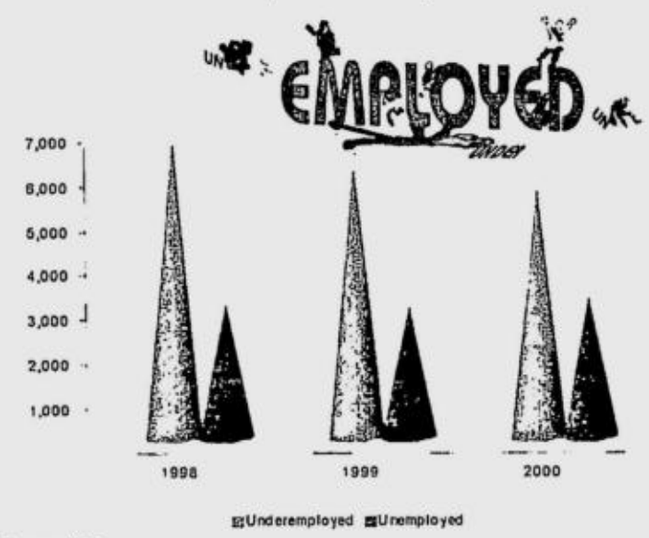
Abalos added that if they would be able to get new customers from the US that would require at least 1,000 seats, the company may have to invest another $6 million.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Unemployment & underemployment

(October 1998 to 2000, in thousands)



Source: NSO

As of October 2000, the number of unemployed jumped by 6.9 percent to 3.1 million compared to the same period last year. The underemployed or those wanting to work additional hours fell by 9.2 percent to 5.6 million. However, of the employed, full-time workers decreased by 1.2 percent to 18.1 million as the number of those working less than 40 hours a week rose by 2.9 percent to 9.4 million.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of December 19, 2000

ASSETS		
Cash & Cash Items	P	1,034,848,789
Due from Bangko Sentral		379,952,982
Due from Other Banks		10,167,090,273
Interbank Loans Receivable		1,461,085,397
Trading Account Securities (Net)		557,798,753
Investments in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments (Net)		13,702,585,255
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		14,458,995,014
Equity Investments (Net)		402,399,605
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		1,911,991,173
Other Assets (Net)		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,407,432,677
Others		3,888,901,621
TOTAL ASSETS	P	52,373,081,539
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	6,609,713,567
Savings Deposits		9,012,564,123
Time Deposits		8,556,301,025
Special/Other Deposits		48,361,280
Due to Bangko Sentral		14,377,550
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		665,770,474
Bills Payable:		
BSP – Rediscounts/Special Programs		19,045,668
Interbank Borrowings		8,246,633,876
Others		4,349,799,880
Unearned Income & Other Deferred Credits		532,861,801
Other Liabilities		2,420,747,859
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	40,476,177,103
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	7,087,057,923
Surplus		4,760,537,424
Surplus Reserves		49,309,089
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	11,896,904,436
TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	52,373,081,539
Minority Interest in Allied Undertakings/Subsidiaries/Affiliates		-
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	413,355,260
Bills for Collection		117,103,571
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		5,338,268,775
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		2,587,362,346
Assets Held under Trust & Investment Management Agreements		4,169,928,401
Invested in:		
Government Securities		932,119,849
Other Securities, Debt Instruments And Shares of Stock		232,454,900
Loans & Discounts		15,170,234
Other Assets		2,990,183,418
Accountabilities:		
Trust & Other Fiduciary		3,282,969,652
Common Trust Funds		185,298,586
Investment/Fund Management		701,660,163
Other Contingent Accounts		131,935,058
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	12,757,953,411

Other Information

1. Deposits of:		
a) Government	P	234,511,739
b) Banks		134,093,251
c) Trust Department		2,045,810,894
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
a) Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 6% (Small Enterprises)		206.00%
b) Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 2% (Medium Enterprises)		487.00%
3. Amount of Non-Performing Loans		2,786,050,985
4. Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio		15.95%
5. Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets		6,474,974,634
6. General Provision for Loan Losses		276,659,988
7. Specific Provision for Loan Losses		1,129,792,360
8. Return on Equity (ROE)		6.70%
9. Amount of DOSRI Loans/Advances		593,233,702
10. Ratio of DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		3.40%
11. Amount of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances		12,421
12. Ratio of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		0.00%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
) S.S.

We, Benjamin G. Bernas and Victor B. Valdepeñas of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd) BENJAMIN G. BERNAS
First Vice President

(Sgd) VICTOR B. VALDEPEÑAS
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 8th day of January 2001, exhibiting to me their Community Tax No. 8850838 issued at Parañaque City on March 13, 2000 and Community Tax No. 14493805 issued at Makati City on February 29, 2000, respectively.

Doc. No. 357
Page No. 73
Book No. XXIII
Series of 2001.

MIGUEL G. PADERNAL
NOTARY PUBLIC
UNTIL DEC. 31, 2001
PTR NO. 1956280
JAN. 2, 2000
MAKATI CITY

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of December 19, 2000

ASSETS		
Cash & Cash Items	P	1,035,393,510
Due from Bangko Sentral		379,952,982
Due from Other Banks		10,167,090,273
Interbank Loans Receivable		1,461,085,397
Trading Account Securities (Net)		578,749,269
Investments in Bonds & Other Debt Instruments (Net)		13,730,585,255
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		14,128,569,401
Equity Investments (Net)		104,755,300
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		1,918,851,552
Other Assets (Net)		
Property Owned/Acquired		4,407,432,677
Others		4,418,016,119
TOTAL ASSETS	P	52,330,481,735
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	6,527,578,571
Savings Deposits		8,980,287,876
Time Deposits		8,556,301,025
Special/Other Deposits		48,361,280
Due to Bangko Sentral		14,377,550
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		665,770,474
Bills Payable:		
BSP – Rediscounts/Special Programs		19,045,668
Interbank Borrowings		8,246,633,876
Others		4,350,299,880
Unearned Income & Other Deferred Credits		532,861,801
Other Liabilities		2,492,059,298
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	40,433,577,299
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	7,087,057,923
Surplus		4,760,537,424
Surplus Reserves		49,309,089
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	11,896,904,436
TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	52,330,481,735
Minority Interest in Allied Undertakings/Subsidiaries/Affiliates		
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	413,355,260
Bills for Collection		117,103,571
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		5,349,078,699
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		2,612,329,746
Assets Held under Trust & Investment Management Agreements		4,169,928,401
Invested in:		
Government Securities		932,119,849
Other Securities, Debt Instruments And Shares of Stock		232,454,900
Loans & Discounts		15,170,234
Other Assets		2,990,183,418
Accountabilities:		
Trust & Other Fiduciary		3,282,969,652
Common Trust Funds		185,298,586
Investment/Fund Management		701,660,163
Other Contingent Accounts		131,935,058
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	12,793,730,735

Other Information

1. Deposits of:		
a) Government	P	234,511,739
b) Banks		134,093,251
c) Trust Department		2,045,810,894
2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries:		
a) UnionBank Currency Brokers Corporation		
b) UBP Capital Corporation		
c) UBP Securities, Inc.		

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
) S.S.

We, Benjamin G. Bernas and Victor B. Valdepeñas of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd) BENJAMIN G. BERNAS
First Vice President

(Sgd) VICTOR B. VALDEPEÑAS
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 8th day of January 2001, exhibiting to me their Community Tax No. 8850838 issued at Parañaque City on March 13, 2000 and Community Tax No. 14493805 issued at Makati City on February 29, 2000, respectively.

Doc. No. 358
Page No. 73
Book No. XXIII
Series of 2001.

MIGUEL G. PADERNAL
NOTARY PUBLIC
UNTIL DEC. 31, 2001
PTR NO. 1956280
JAN. 2, 2000
MAKATI CITY

PSE starts trading gov't bonds today

THE COUNTRY starts listing government debt on the Philippine Stock Exchange for the first time today to make it easier for individual investors to trade fixed-income securities, when it sells bonds in small denominations to help finance a budget shortfall.

The bonds, with a coupon of 13.625 percent and due July 2004, will be sold in denominations of P5,000, the PSE said in a statement. They will have a same-day settlement rule and be exempt from capital gains tax and other taxes.

The Bureau of Treasury will likely use the proceeds from the sale to finance an expected budget deficit this year. The deficit last year reached about P140 billion, more than double the target, as revenue collection and sales of assets fell short of expectations, the government said earlier last week.

The central bank has cut interest rates in the past few weeks to spur economic growth and to reflect lower borrowing costs in the United States, the Philippines' biggest trading partner.

Still, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said Friday the government may raise rates if the peso continues falling after a three-day slide in the currency.

"The listing and trading of small-denominated treasury bonds is an important step towards improving investors' awareness about the PSE and in increasing their participation in the securities market. This will also pave the way for the listing of other debt instruments in the exchange and will contribute to the development of the exchange-traded debt market," PSE president Ramon T. Garcia said earlier.

Garcia also said the listing was in line with the PSE's corporate vision "to become a full-service exchange and to provide a balanced product mix for greater flexibility and resilience."

The PSE is set to be converted from a non-stock to a profit-oriented and stock organization by August this year in accordance with the Securities Regulation Code.

The government securities to be listed on Monday is a component of the BTr's Small Investors Program. Some P30.35 billion, part of the P50-billion small-denominated treasury bonds, will be initially listed and traded exclusively on the exchange.

Bloomberg, with a report from Doris C. Dumlao

System to speed up phone networks' link-up readied

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission is preparing a fault reporting system that will speed up the resolution of technical problems in the interconnection of the networks of two telephone companies.

Interconnection among local phone companies has been hampered by commercial and technical issues that caused inconvenience to subscribers.

NTC Commissioner Joseph A. Santiago said the fault reporting system would help phone firms deal with the technical aspects of interconnection even without involving higher management.

He said Bayan Telecommunications Inc. and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. have started adopting the new fault reporting system.

"We will adopt this system in a new memorandum circular and make it a standard in the industry," he said.

In a separate interview, Elizabeth R. Locsin, vice president for corporate and carrier management of the Integrated Broadband Services unit of the Lopez Group, said Bayantel was about to sign an agreement with PLDT regarding the new system.

However, some minor technicalities have yet to be ironed out.

"PLDT wanted to include Smart (PLDT's subsidiary) into the agreement and there were also some considerations regarding interconnection trunks," said Locsin. But then these are only minor considerations and the two companies are expected to sign the agreement before this month.

Early last year, PLDT reported unusual call traffic coming from some Bayantel subscribers. The company said it could mean illegal bypass operations.

This prompted Bayantel to disconnect suspected illegal bypass operators and initiated moves to improve interconnection with the telecom giant. As a result, Bayantel reported a 100-percent call completion rate with PLDT late last year.

Meanwhile, Bayantel's subscribers decreased to 215,000 as of end-2000 from 245,000 in 1999 due to the prevailing economic crisis and the company's efforts to remove delinquent subscribers from its system.

The company also allotted P1.5 billion for capital expenditure this year. It would spend the funds to its carrier, commercial and data businesses.

Aside from a number of data services to be introduced this year, the company also hopes to launch its cellular phone service as soon as the Court of Appeals grants its motion for reconsideration to an order rejecting the company's provisional authority.

Anthony O. Alcantara

Peso seen jumping to 46 to $1 after Estrada trial

EXECUTIVE Secretary Edgardo Angara said on Saturday the peso would stabilize at 46-47 to the dollar once President Estrada's impeachment trial was over.

Angara said in a radio interview that Finance Secretary Jose Pardo and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura made the forecast earlier in the week.

"Buenaventura and Pardo said the peso's rate would hit 46 to 47 once this is over," he said. The peso closed at 51.59 to the dollar on Friday.

The fragile currency, weakened by the country's political crisis, hit a historical low of 52 to the dollar on Jan. 2, a few days after a series of bomb blasts hit Manila, killing 22 people and left more than 100 wounded.

Mr. Estrada is facing an impeachment trial at the Senate on allegations that he received more than P400 million in payoffs from an illegal numbers game and kickbacks from tobacco taxes.

The former movie actor, who repeatedly denied the charges, has said he was confident that he would be acquitted.

"Personally, I believe that the exchange rate (peso/dollar) would stabilize immediately after the impeachment," Angara said.

Senators have said they expected Mr. Estrada's impeachment trial to be over by the middle of next month.

Meantime, the government will raise interest rates if the peso weakens further this week, Buenaventura said.

"We'll come in if it gets worse, specially if they start playing with it," he said, referring to speculators. "We'll sell dollars and raise interest rates."

A rate increase would be the first since December. The central bank cut rates five times for a total of 2.5 percentage points since last month. They will stand at 12.5 percent effective Monday.

The bank raised rates four percentage points to 15 percent in October to slow the peso's slide to record lows following corruption allegations against President Estrada.

Reuters, Bloomberg

Bourse urged to proceed with demutualization plan

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

FORMER Philippine Stock Exchange president Jose Luis Yulo Jr. said poor market conditions should not deter the local bourse from offering its shares to the public.

In the "Interaction" forum on Friday, Yulo—who was among those who testified for the prosecution of President Estrada on the impeachment trial last week—said the demutualization of the PSE would help shed its "Old Boys Club" image.

He also said that when the market was on a downtrend, it might even be a good time to attract investors for the sale of PSE shares.

By August this year, the PSE is required by the newly enacted Securities Regulation Code to demutualize ownership. But while its members have already voted in favor of its conversion into a stock organization, no definite schedule for the actual initial public offering has been set.

"If I were a current broker now and I would sell shares, of course I'd want to wait till the market is doing better as the value of my ownership will be higher once converted into shares. That's the whole idea," Yulo said.

But while the selling party could ask for higher value when the market is trading on a bull market, Yulo said there were opportunities for the investing public precisely when the market stood weak.

"If I were the investor on the outside, I'd be more inclined to invest now when the value of the seats is lower and therefore I can get a bigger share. So it now depends which side you are," he said.

But Yulo said he believed that the demutualization strategy would help prevent another BW Resources Corp. scandal, which had resulted in the near-collapse of the PSE during his term as president.

"Among the benefits of demutualization will be that people will be given the chance to own the stock and therefore the stock exchange itself will be open to more transparency and subjected to the same rules of the listed firms," he said.

"Yes, it would help greatly. As a matter of fact, this is one trend that has been going on all over the world: converting bourse ownership from those of the brokers alone—like a membership club or an Old Boys Club as they call it—into a stock corporation," he said.

The 184 members of the PSE approved during a membership meeting last month the conversion of the local bourse from a non-stock to a stock corporation alongside a minimum P5-billion capital build-up.

The minimum capitalization was based on the PSE's existing net worth of P1.47 billion, which will represent its paid-up capital and 25 percent of the new authorized capital.

Transfarm, Daewoo nearing settlement

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

CEBU-BASED Transfarm Co. and Inc. and its estranged partner Daewoo Corp. are nearing a settlement on their protracted contract dispute on the assembly and distribution of the Korean carmaker's models in the country.

Transfarm chair Luis B. Quisumbing said discussions with Daewoo have resumed late last year on a fresh note after the Korean carmaker changed its representatives in its Philippine subsidiary.

Due to insolvency problems, Daewoo reorganized its top management last year pending the entry of a new investor group. Quisumbing said they were likely to reach an agreement even before Daewoo gets a new partner.

Quisumbing said that with new faces on the other side of the table, Transfarm and Daewoo were more likely to reach a common ground because the Koreans have a fresh mandate and were now more open to their Filipino partner's demands.

He said Daewoo's previous officials have become too obstinate in their position that a settlement was unlikely to be reached unless a third party intervened.

The contract dispute arose from Daewoo's decision to terminate its partnership with Transfarm ahead of its expiration and move ahead with the assembly and distribution of Daewoo cars on its own after the Quisumbing family, majority owner of Transfarm, hatched a joint venture with Chrysler Corp. (now DaimlerChrysler).

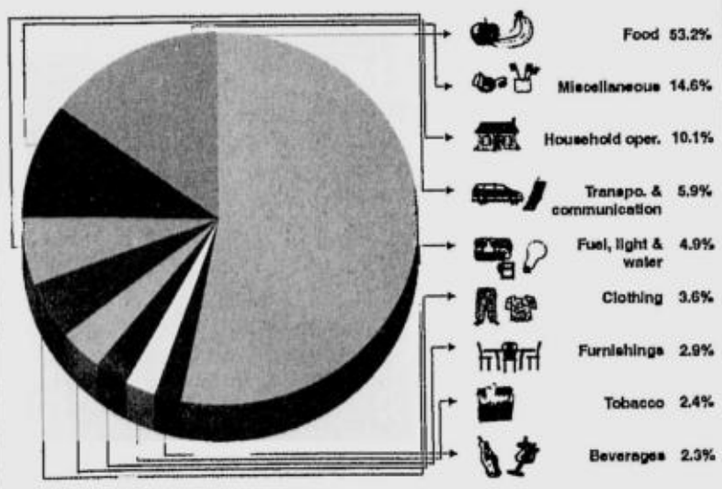
Daewoo has registered with the Board of Investments which Transfarm has vigorously opposed because it was seeking compensation from the Korean carmaker for building the Daewoo brand in the Philippines from 1993 to 1997. Quisumbing claimed that Transfarm spent roughly P1 billion during the five years it assembled and distributed Daewoo cars in the country.

The dispute has led to several cases pending with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Cebu regional trial court, and Hong Kong courts.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Personal consumption expenditure by purpose (3Qtr. 2000, at 1985 prices)



Source: NSCB

Personal consumption expenditure grew by 3.5 percent in the third quarter. Spending for transportation and communications posted the biggest increase for the quarter at 11.6 percent. The rise was due to more vehicle purchases and telecommunication subscriptions. Food consumption, the major household expense, grew by 2.4 percent.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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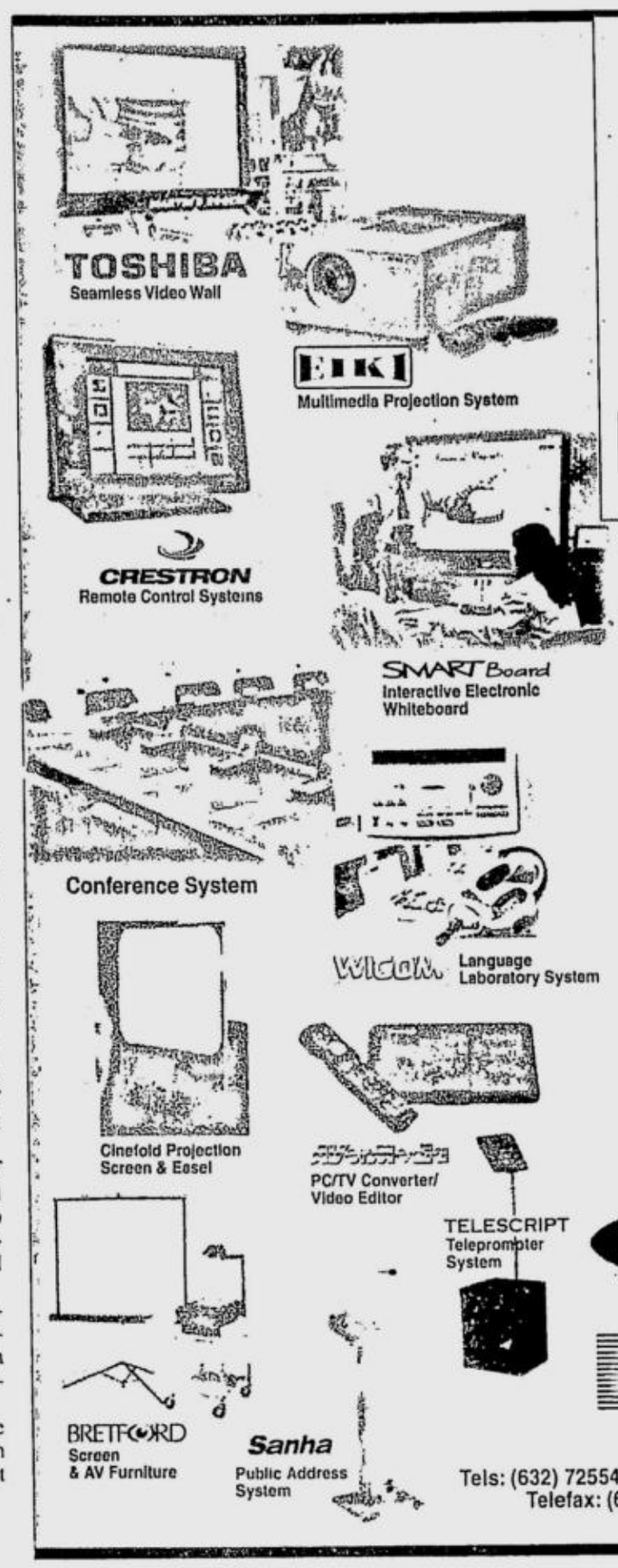

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HP LaserJet's Getting Personal...1 on 1!

1 Get a chance to win personal tools such as a Nokia cellphone, HP Jornada handheld PC or an HP Omnibook 6000 notebook!

From January 2, 2001 to February 28, 2001, every buyer of an HP LaserJet 1100 or 1100A printer will be given a raffle coupon for a chance to win any of the following prizes:

One First Prize:	HP Omnibook laptop computer
Three Second Prizes:	HP Jornada handheld PC
Ten Third Prizes:	Nokia cellphone*

After filling up the coupon, it must be dropped at the drop box located at the store where the LaserJet was purchased no later than Feburary 28, 2001. The draw will be on Monday, March 5, 2001 at 3:00 PM at the HP offices, Rufino Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati, under the supervision of the DTI. Winners will be notified by registered mail. Claimants must present the raffle claim stub and proof of purchase to Mojica, de la Paz & Associates, Valuepoint Executive Apartments, 227 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati. Prizes may be claimed up to 60 days from notification. Cellphone prizes are transferrable but not convertible to cash. A participant can only win once. If his name is drawn more than once, he gets the bigger prize.
Those disqualified from joining this promotion are employees of Hewlett-Packard, their dealers and advertising agencies and relatives up to the second degree of affinity or consanguinity.

2 Buy 1 printer, get 1 toner FREE!

From January 2, 2001 to February 28, 2001 every buyer of the HP LaserJet 4050, 2100 or 5000 printers will receive one free HP toner. To receive the toner, claimants must present proof of purchase to Mojica, de la Paz & Associates, 3rd floor, Valuepoint Executive Apartments, 227 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati. Deadline for claiming is April 30, 2001.
For this promotion, the 20% tax of prizes exceeding P10,000 will be paid by Hewlett-Packard.

hp invent

*Cellphones shall not be used to obtain new subscriptions from Globe Telecom.

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Follow-through buying seen to lift stock prices further

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

MARKET PLAY

AFTER an unexpected bullish week, the market is expected to see some follow-through bargain-hunting on selective stocks this week as investors take position ahead of the Feb. 12 conclusion of the impeachment trial of President Estrada.

The rally last week, which market players attributed to the buying spree of government financial institutions, surprised most traders who nonetheless saw it as a cue of a possible turnaround in the market.

"We can't understand why it's been bullish but we're happy because it has given us more business. Maybe they know something we don't know as the GFIs are buying heavily," said Irving Ackerman, president of I. Ackerman & Co. Inc.

"We might see some more uptick but the market cannot go up so much this time, but I don't think it will go down either," he said.

Wellex Global Equities head of research James Lago said the stock market was still bound to rise this week based on technical analysis.

"The way we look at it, the Philippine market is still bullish as it has shown since the start of last week. The rally seems sustainable over the short-term. We have the immediate technical resistance at something like 1,570," Lago said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) breached several technical resistance levels and closed at 1,541.65 on Friday, up by 72.57 points week-on-week from 1,469.08.

"We are looking at the index and think that it can probably go above 1,600 within January and stay up until first week of February. Right now, the market is moving on expectations that something will happen on Feb. 12. It's something investors are looking forward to whatever the outcome will be," he said.

The strengthening of the Phisix last week, some market players said, could show that an "Angara compromise" might be somehow acceptable as a fallback in case President Estrada gets acquitted.

The beleaguered President last week named his former running mate and Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara to assume the post of executive secretary and turn over a lot of presidential powers to him.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said that while the ouster of Mr. Estrada was the best scenario being eagerly awaited by the market, relegating powers to Angara might be acceptable enough.

Vickers Ballas assistant director for sales Enrique Sta. Ana said that the absence of big foreign funds in the market has made it light enough to allow a concerted effort among GFIs to prop up the market.

"There are signs of profit-taking in the last two days but there still seems to be continued bargain-hunting," he said.

Sta. Ana said the market could succumb to profit-taking pressures as some stocks have started to show signs of being overbought. He projected that the market would again test the 1,540 to 1,550 levels this week.

Asked for the possible reason behind the bargain-hunting activities in the market, Sta. Ana said two successive cuts in interest rates by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas helped inspire a rally. He also noted that the market favored any bombshell dropped against Mr. Estrada during the impeachment trial.

"The mentality is that anyone who buys before Feb. 12 could make money. If it's a conviction—there'd be no questions asked that it would go up but even if acquitted, there still might be some buying from GFIs to make it seem acceptable," he said.

In terms of specific buying opportunities, Wellex Global's Lago said among the blue chips, fast-food giant Jollibee Foods Corp. was the only one remaining with attractive valuations as other recommended stocks have already made significant headway like La Tondeña Distillers Inc. and Filinvest Land.

Sta. Ana, for his part, said he would recommend buying on corrections of blue-chip issues SM Prime Holdings Inc., Ayala Corp. and Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co.

SEC to review trading rules of bourse

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission will ask the Philippine Stock Exchange to submit all its rules to the regulatory agency for review to see which provisions were outdated given the passage of the Securities Regulation Code last year.

In a briefing last week, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said the SEC would direct the PSE to submit all the exchange's rules, particularly those on block sales.

"We have to review (those rules), for instance, the block sale. We said, come up with your rules and we will approve it," Bautista said.

She explained that it was the PSE's responsibility to deal with the block sale and only when the exchange encountered a problem with the rules should it approach the SEC for guidance.

"We want really to implement the SRO, but they must have rules we can accept. And then they can implement these," Bautista said.

The PSE earlier submitted its rules on block sales but this was prior to the enactment last August of the SRC. Bautista said the PSE rules, especially those on block sales, may not conform with the new code.

The SEC chief added that the SEC would revisit its rules on the bond exchanges and futures trading.

The Investment Houses Association of the Philippines and the Bankers Association of the Philippines plan to set up a bond exchange while a group of brokers have a pending application with the SEC to set up a futures exchange.

The SEC has promised to fast-track the rules on futures exchange this year. On the other hand, IHAP and BAP are discussing the bond exchange mechanics with consultants of the SEC.

Bautista said the SEC has approved the rules on the listing and trading of small-denominated treasury bonds.

The PSE and the Bureau of Treasury will hold the inaugural trading of an initial P30.3 billion worth of SDT bonds today. The SDT bonds will adopt the instant settlement scheme instead of the regular three-day settlement period for stocks.

The PSE is preparing its conversion from a non-stock to a profit-oriented and stock organization by August this year in line with the rule of the SRC that all exchanges should be demutualized.

HK, Taiwanese firms eyed as Uniwide buyer

THE INTERIM receiver of the Uniwide Group of Companies is in talks with a Hong Kong group and a Taiwanese group to possibly take the place of French retailer Casino Guichard-Perrachon, which recently backed out of investing in the cash-strapped local retail chain.

Interim receiver Monico Jacob confirmed that he was in discussions with a publicly listed Hong Kong-based group that was partly involved in retail operations to invest in Uniwide.

Jacob said that other potential investors have also made inquiries on possible investment in Uniwide.

"There are inquiries, some from investment bankers and some of them direct," Jacob said.

Sources said that, although no successor to Casino has been finalized, the interim receiver wanted to push through with agreed upon dacion en pago arrangements forged with Uniwide creditor-banks under an approved rehabilitation plan that provided for the entry of Casino.

The SEC, however, has told the receiver that approval of Uniwide's creditors must first be secured.

Top officials of Wal-Mart arrived last week to meet with government officials to discuss the American retail giant's planned investments in the country, possibly by renewing its takeover bid for Uniwide Holdings Inc.

Wal-Mart is still reportedly keen on the Philippines despite the prevailing political crisis, which has discouraged two major French retailers, Casino group and Carrefour, from pushing through with investments in the country.

Jacob, however, said that he was not privy to the talks between government officials and Wal-Mart representatives.

In June 1999, the Uniwide group filed for rehabilitation with the Securities and Exchange Commission because diversification into real estate and the souring of the economy as a result of the Asian financial crisis led to the group's difficulties in meeting its more than P10 billion in debts.

GG & A Club Shares

SEC License Broker #007575 • As of Jan. 15, 2001

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	-	1,700,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,550,000	1,700,000
Baguio Country Club	700,000	800,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	80,000	100,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	130,000
Camp John Hay	350,000	400,000
Canlubang	800,000	900,000
Canyonwoods	-	400,000
Capitol Hills	115,000	135,000
Cebu Country Club	2,030,000	2,300,000
Celebrity Sports Club	200,000	220,000
City Sports Club Cebu "A"	-	709,500
City Sports Club Cebu "B"		764,500
City Sports Club Cebu "C"		1,226,500
Club Filipino	-	330,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	260,000
Evercrest "A"	-	130,000
Forest Hills "A"	245,000	280,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	370,000
Forest Hills "C"		450,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	400,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	500,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	18,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	13,500,000	15,000,000
Manila Polo	2,600,000	-
Manila Southwoods "A"	800,000	850,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	800,000	900,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	200,000
Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Ind./Corp.)	Please Call	Please Call
Montemar (Corp.)	-	55,000
Montemar (Ind.)	-	40,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "B"	Please Call	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	Please Call
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	130,000
Quezon City Sports Club	230,000	250,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C"	Please Call	Please Call
Sta. Elena "A"	-	1,900,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,900,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corp.)	-	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Ind.)	-	Please Call
Tagaytay Country Club	450,000	500,000
Tagaytay Highlands	1,000,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	860,000	900,000
Valle Verde (Ind)	160,000	-
Valley Golf	280,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	7,100,000	7,400,000

PLAYING RIGHTS

(Available Lessees)

Manila Golf	450,000	Valle Verde	15,000

(Available Lessors)

Alabang "A"	40,000	Mimosa Golf	20,000
Calatagan "A"	15,000	Orchard "A"	20,000
Canlubang	70,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eaglendge	30,000	Sta. Elena	70,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	30,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	65,000
Manila Southwoods	50,000	Tivoli Royale	20,000
Makati Sports "A"	35,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	500,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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Celebrity	210,000
Club Fil	300,000
Eagle C	600,000
Forest Hills B	300,000
Manila Polo	2,600,000
Highlands CC	470,000
Midlands	880,000
Riviera "A", Mla. Golf	
Wack Wack	7.350M

BUYER	
Alabang	1.5M
Baguio CC	750,000
Eagle Ridge A	350,000
Manila Golf Corp	17,300,000
Southwoods A	800,000
Orchard A	290,000
Sta. Elena A	1,750,000
Sta. Elena B	2,000,000
Wack Wack	7,300,000
Highlands, Midlands	
Forest B	

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		SELLING	BUYING
1.	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,600,000	1,550,000
2	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,650,000	
3	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	750,000	700,000
4.	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	150,000	
5	CAMP JOHN HAY	400,000	320,000
6	CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	850,000	
7.	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	120,000	
8.	CELEBRITY CLUB	220,000	
9	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	490,000	450,000
10	CLUB FILIPINO	340,000	
11.	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	250,000	
12.	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	400,000	330,000
13.	EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	
14	FAIRWAYS & BLUEWATER	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
15	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	300,000	
16.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	550,000	
17.	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600,000	
18	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	500,000	400,000
19	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	550,000	
20	MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP)	17,000,000	
21.	MANILA POLO CLUB		2,600,000
22.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	1,000,000	850,000
23	MANILA YACHT CLUB	850,000	
24.	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	170,000	
25	METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	200,000	160,000
26.	MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	500,000	
27.	MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (CORP.)	900,000	
28	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	Pls. Call	280,000
29	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
30.	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
31.	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	240,000	
32.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	290,000	
33.	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	600,000	500,000
34.	ROYAL NORTHWOODS	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
35.	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB		1,900,000
36.	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	500,000	
37.	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (CORP)	800,000	
38.	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB		1,000,000
39.	TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	900,000	
40.	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	180,000	
41.	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	350,000	
42.	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		7,300,000

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, January 12, 2000)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58.50	59.5	58.5	59.5	254,800
China Banking Corp.	730.0	730	730	730	2,000
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	20.00	20	18	18	11,700
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	54.50	56	54.5	56	30,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	187.0	192	186	191	98,650
Philippine National Bank	37.00	38	36.5	38	56,400
Rizal Comm'l Bkg. Corp. "A"	21.00	21	21	21	5,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	34.00	35	34	35	41,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.60	1.68	1.6	1.68	58,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1250	1255	1245	1245	5,770
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1110	1110	1075	1075	14,900
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	50.00	50.5	50	50	8,300
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	.4600	.52	.46	.52	2,880,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	.0450	.046	.045	.046	1,000,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	.4500	.45	.45	.45	100,000
Piltel	.5800	.6	.56	.6	510,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	880.0	900	880	895	292,490
Ivantage Corp.	.8700	.87	.87	.87	10,000
Philweb.com Inc.	.0350	.035	.034	.035	14,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. "A"	48.50	49	48.5	48.5	17,800
Manila Electric Co. "B"	54.50	54.5	53.5	54.5	1,962,200
Petron Corp.	1.30	1.3	1.26	1.3	5,336,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	.9900	1	.99	1	330,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l SV	.7900	.8	.79	.8	490,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	.5700	.6	.57	.6	1,080,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	.1400	.14	.14	.14	110,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	.3700	.37	.37	.37	190,000
Union Cement Corp.	.6000	.6	.6	.6	320,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.30	2.4	2.3	2.4	53,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	10.00	10.25	10	10.25	719,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	32.00	32.5	32	32.5	43,000
Pancake House Inc.	1.56	1.62	1.56	1.62	11,000
San Miguel Corp. "A"	49.50	50	49.5	50	27,400
San Miguel Corp. "B"	56.00	57.5	56	57.5	386,300
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	7.40	7.7	7.4	7.7	1,878,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	.2800	.28	.28	.28	50,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.25	11.5	11	11.5	3,500
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	.7700	.77	.77	.77	70,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	5,000
Bacnotan Cons. Indus. Inc.	12.00	12	12	12	1,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.35	3.5	3.35	3.45	10,172,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	.1600	.16	.16	.16	100,000
Crown Equities Inc.	.2700	.27	.27	.27	1,180,000
Southeast Asian Cement	.2200	.22	.22	.22	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	.2900	.33	.29	.32	4,390,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	.7400	.78	.74	.78	500,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	21.50	21.75	21.5	21.75	72,000
Global Equities Inc.	.3500	.35	.35	.35	100,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	.2200	.22	.22	.22	150,000
Ionics Inc.	15.00	15.5	15	15.5	2,542,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.10	2.1	2.1	2.1	1,200,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	20,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings "B"	1.04	1.2	1.04	1.2	24,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "A"	.0150	.015	.015	.015	400,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "B"	.0160	.016	.016	.016	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	.7900	.8	.79	.8	6,500,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	.4900	.49	.49	.49	1,210,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	.6000	.6	.59	.6	9,510,000
Solid Group Inc.	.4800	.49	.48	.49	6,520,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	.3300	.33	.31	.32	6,840,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
A Brown Company Inc.	.5400	.54	.54	.54	90,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.40	1.4	1.4	1.4	10,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.80	4.8	4.8	4.8	1,000
Music Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.8	2.85	376,000
Picop Resources Inc.	.1100	.115	.11	.115	800,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	.8600	.86	.86	.86	10,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	7.70	7.8	7.6	7.8	392,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	.6900	.7	.69	.7	1,010,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	.6900	.71	.63	.67	12,520,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp	.4000	.4	.4	.4	220,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	50.50	51	50.5	51	432,800
Ayala Corp. Pref.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14*	2,000,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.90	2.9	2.85	2.9	66,000
Jollibee Warrants	9.80	9.8	9.7	9.8	944,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	.0026	.0026	.0026	.0026	51,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.50	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	10.00	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.70	5.9	5.6	5.8	7,041,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	.3500	.36	.32	.32	130,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	.4500	.45	.45	.45	120,000
C & P Homes Inc.	.2100	.215	.21	.215	2,830,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	.3900	.39	.39	.39	450,000
Empire East Land Inc.	.3500	.36	.35	.35	12,830,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.52	1.42	1.52	*10,188,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1	1.04	180,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	.3600	.37	.36	.37	490,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.00	6.1	6	6.1	16,793,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	.0900	.09	.085	.09	1,100,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	.3000	.37	.3	.37	220,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	.0050	.005	.005	.005	12,000,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines "A"	.0140	.014	.014	.014	300,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "B"	.1950	.195	.195	.195	1,460,000
Manila Mining Corp. "A"	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	11,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. "B"	.0060	.006	.006	.006	20,000,000
Omico Corp.	.0038	.0038	.0038	.0038	3,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. "A"	.2450	.245	.245	.245	1,560,000
Philex Mining Corp. "B"	.2400	.24	.23	.23	1,750,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. "A"	.0042	.0042	.0042	.0042	3,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. "A"	.3000	.3	.3	.3	10,000
Pacifica	.0150	.015	.015	.015	1,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	.1900	.19	.185	.19	120,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	579,220	64,266,150.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	154,488,790	569,366,575.00
PRO	52,372,000	163,011,740.00
Mining	51,070,000	1,338,500.00
OIL	4,130,000	53,300.00
GRAND TOTALS:	262,640,010	798,036,265.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	560.33	UP5.74
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,158.84	UP32.36
PRO	538.80	UP14.59
Mining	1,212.40	DOWN 8.47
OIL	1.76	UP0.03
All Shares Index	763.86	UP3.28
Composite	1,541.65	UP25.76

NO. OF ADVANCES: 50; NO. OF DECLINES: 23; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 29;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 102; NO. OF TRADES: 2,745

CURRENCIES

Jan. 12, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency In Peso
United States	Dollar	1.048878	1.000000	51.3250
Japan	Yen	0.008913	0.008498	0.4362
United Kingdom	Pound	1.572687	1.499400	76.9567
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.134479	0.128212	6.5805
Switzerland	Franc	0.650749	0.620424	31.8433
Canada	Dollar	0.702154	0.669434	34.3587
Singapore	Dollar	0.604645	0.576469	29.5873
Australia	Dollar	0.584854	0.557600	28.6188
Bahrain	Dinar	2.782317	2.652661	136.1478
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.279708	0.266674	13.6870
Brunei	Dollar	0.603984	0.575838	29.5549
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000104	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.024113	0.022989	1.1799
UAE	Dirham	0.285603	0.272294	13.9755
Korea	Won	0.000821	0.000783	0.0402
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.953400	48.9333
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.487466	25.0192
France	Franc	0.152450	0.145345	7.4598
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.432634	22.2049
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.069286	3.5561
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.023634	1.2130
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000492	0.0253
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.160350	8.2300
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004756	0.2441
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.00573	0.2941
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.023634	1.2130
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.210568	62.1324

The SEC and poor problem-solving

ON THE MONEY

John Mangun

PRICES of shares on the Philippine Stock Exchange continued to tease and entice as we bounced near the crucial 1,550 Phisix Index level. Volume is increasing and again a break and hold above the 1,550 area is the key to call this a rising market. Interest rates are falling, encouraging money to move into stocks.

There is some rotation of buying, meaning that the more attractive companies are beginning to attract some investors. Again, look for the more favorable Price Earnings Ratios for a better risk-reward scenario. There are no interesting speculative plays for the longer-term investor. However, I am hearing some rumors of a couple of the Internet-related firms that will make announcements at the proper time.

Over the last several months, the Securities and Exchange Commission has been formalizing its rules of implementation for the new Securities Regulation Code (SRC). The law is inadequate and on some specific points, harmful to the development of our equities market. Nonetheless, the implementation by the SEC of the SRC takes us one step closer toward ensuring the Philippine Stock Exchange will never properly develop.

Let me use an example to explain the problem. The example I will use is not completely comparable but will express the concept and the problem.

San Miguel Corp. has a virtual monopoly with its beer. If you sell beer, you must do business with San Miguel. Thousands of different distributors sell San Miguel products. They are small retailers to large hotels. Some sell one case per day, others sell thousands of bottles per day. Moreover, some of San Miguel's customers do not pay for the beer they order. In an effort to insure the financial soundness of its customers, let us imagine that San Miguel requires each dealer to place P100,000 in the bank. The P100,000 must be paid by all, regardless of whether the dealer is a sari-sari store or a large restaurant group.

Some of the outlets simply could not afford to put up the P100,000. Others would decide that their sales and profits were not large enough to justify tying up P100,000 in the beer business. San Miguel might counter that if you cannot afford the money, then merge with other sellers. To those who do not see the economic feasibly of the scheme, San Miguel might say that these individuals have no business selling beer anyway.

The number of beer dealers would decline considerably and the consumer would have fewer choices from whom to buy beer. It might even mean that eventually the only place you could buy beer is at a five-star establishment at five-star prices.

If San Miguel did have a problem with collections, the above solution might create more problems than it would solve. And yet, if the SEC were running San Miguel, this strategy conceivably would be put into practice.

Payment transactions on the stock exchange take place from broker to broker on behalf of their respective clients. There is a very slight chance that a stock-brokerage company might default on the payment of shares. This would most often happen if an order was executed and the firm's client did not pay up. The broker should be made liable since they should have had the client pay before buying the stock. Therefore, the SEC, in line with the SRC, may require each broker, regardless of size, financial soundness, track record, or volume of business to increase its paid-up capital to P100 million.

As in the beer business, the volume of stock business of individual brokers ranges from tens of million to more than a billion pesos a month. Some brokers have hundreds of clients; others have just a few. Some deal only with large institutional clients; others with P100,000 investors. Each and everyone will be subject to the P100-million rule.

At this point, a major default is only a potential problem. The SRC tried to address a problem that has never happened. Yes, it almost did in the trading of BW Resources. In that case, the P100 million would not have even come close to covering the default. The potential problem of a default could be addressed by proper PSE monitoring of the value of transactions of the brokers on (at the least) a daily basis, sort of like the "threshold" the banks use on their clients' accounts. Further, some clients are given special treatment in that they do not have to pay for their purchases before the transaction is done.

The effectiveness of the SEC rule is an unknown. But be assured that perhaps more than half of the existing brokers will close shop. There is no question that, in relation to the size of our market, we have many more brokers than other exchanges have. However, there is no rational argument that having fewer brokers will improve the stock market.

The SEC is addressing a problem that has only a potential and not a probability of taking place. It advances a solution that may not achieve its purpose. And it will cause a structural and economic upheaval at a time when the industry and investors cry out for stability and calm.

On a personal note, I will be doing an introductory seminar on Technical Analysis on Jan. 27, 2001. For details, please call Mr. Raul Putong at 636-1121 to 35.

(John Mangun can be reached at Fax Number 634-2349 or e-mail at jm@epic.net.)

Metrobank completes integration of operations with Solidbank

AFTER only six months from the time it acquired Solidbank, Metrobank has completed integrating its banking operations with those of Solidbank.

The consolidation of the two banks' branches brought Metrobank's domestic branch network to 471 at year's end after 113 Solidbank branches were integrated into the Metrobank platform.

Metrobank said close to half were consolidated with existing Metrobank branches, while many were simply converted into the Metrobank setup and retained at their original sites. Some branches were converted but were scheduled for relocation to new sites.

It said several new Metrobank branches were also opened with the use of existing Solidbank branch licenses. These were the Tayuman-Felix Huertas, Tanay, Siniloan (Laguna), Concepcion (Tarlac) and Bangued (Abra) branches. Metrobank said its branch expansion plans for 2001 included the opening of 42 new branches nationwide, using the freed up licenses of former Solidbank branches.

Similarly, the two banks ATM networks have been consolidated. Out of Solidbank's 98 ATMs, 53 were upgraded while 45 non-upgradable machines will be replaced with new models. Solidbank's ATMs are now linked with Metrobank and all 36 Bancnet-member banks.

Metrobank president Antonio S. Abacan Jr. said that during the course of the integration, the best policies and work systems within the two banks were identified and adopted.

"The integration of Metrobank and Solidbank operations is considered a success as the process enabled Metrobank to keep the best people from both institutions, expand its geographic network to cover a wider client base, and realize substantial cost savings," Abacan added.

The savings, initially estimated at P760 million, comes from the rationalization of the manpower complement, disposal of Solidbank's excess assets, pre-termination of branch leases, and termination of contracts with IT vendors and service agencies.

Metrobank emerged at the forefront of the local banking industry as of Sept. 27 (the cut-off date set by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for published statements of condition), with a consolidated asset level of P416.61 billion.

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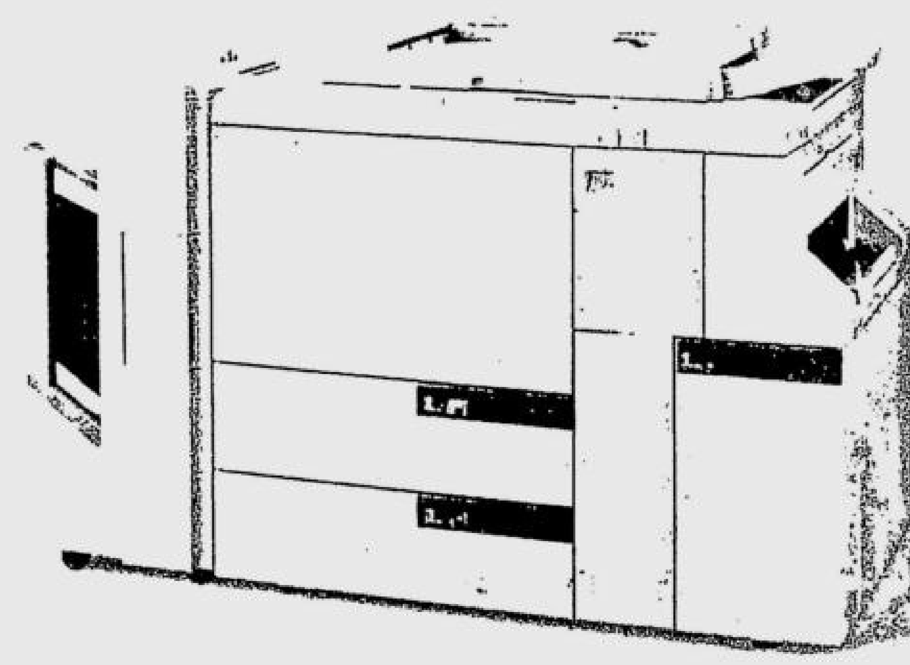

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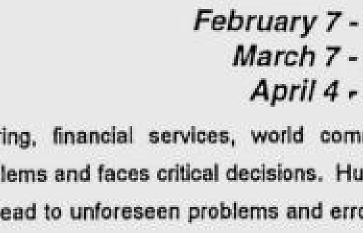

Problem Solving & Decision Making

February 7 - 9
March 7 - 9
April 4 - 6

In any organization, whether it's manufacturing, financial services, world commerce, government or high tech, every employee encounters problems and faces critical decisions. Hunches, instinct and pure intuition may be inspiring, but they can lead to unforeseen problems and erroneous decisions.

Kepner-Tregoe's Problem Solving & Decision Making program provides a logical, consistent approach to every situation. A proven method that helps people get control of the situation at hand. Four specific disciplines are learned in the program: ***Situation Appraisal (SA), Problem Analysis (PA), Decision Analysis (DA), Potential Problem/Potential Opportunity Analysis (PPA/POA).***

Project Management

January 24 – 26
February 21 – 23
March 21 – 23

Projects can come in all sizes, varieties, and complexities. And while each project may be vastly different, in each case every member of the project team must posses excellent technical and people management skills in order to get the project completed ***on time, on budget and with the desired results.***

Kepner-Tregoe's Project Management program has been developed to work with all businesses, large and small, that are involved with project activities. Key project personnel, including new managers and those who need refinement of their techniques, will benefit from the course. Project support personnel can also learn to maximize their role as team members for optimum project results.

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Wall St. split on next Fed rate cut

NEW YORK—Soothing comments from Federal Reserve policymakers and mixed economic data had left Wall Street nearly evenly split over how deeply the central bank would cut interest rates at its next meeting in late January, a Reuters poll found Friday.

All 25 US primary dealers said they expected the Fed to ease rates again this month after it electrified markets last week with a hefty half-a-percentage-point inter-meeting cut.

The Reuters poll showed 12 primary dealers, top firms that worked with the Fed in open markets, looked for a half-point cut in the federal funds rate to 5.5 percent at the Jan. 30-31 meeting while 13 expected a quarter-point cut.

The poll also showed a jump in the chances Wall Street saw for the economy to sink into recession this year to 36 percent, up from 28 percent in a late December Reuters poll.

Earlier this week, financial markets were rife with talk of far more aggressive Fed rate cuts, with federal funds contract pricing in a near 100-percent chance for a half-point rate cut in January and influential investment bank Morgan Stanley Dean Witter forecasting a recession for the first half of 2001.

But views shifted after the government reported on Friday that retail sales rose 0.1 percent in December after falling 0.5 percent in November. Many economists had looked for a drop in consumer spending. Wholesale inflation in December was unchanged but up 0.3 percent, excluding food and energy costs.

"The higher retail sales and higher core producer prices tend to tilt you in the direction of less rather than more action on Jan. 31," said John Ryding, a senior economist at Bear Stearns.

The Friday poll marked a shift from a Reuters survey on Jan. 3, when 21 dealers called for only a quarter-point cut in January, two dealers looked for a half-point cut and two dealers thought the Fed would do nothing.

Fed funds, the short-term rate banks charge each other on overnight loans, currently is at 6 percent.

Some economists began to reconsider their views after several Fed presidents this week said they saw a rebound in growth later this year and downplayed Wall Street's recession fears.

Federal funds futures are now pricing in only a 50-percent chance for a half-point cut soon this month.

In light of Friday's retail sales data and stronger-than-expected core producer prices in December—plus signs that inflationary pressures might still rise as the effects of higher energy costs and a falling dollar bite—some economists said the Fed might be in a difficult spot.

"I think the word stagflation is apt," Barclays Capital chief US economist Henry Willmore said. The Fed might have to decide what the bigger priority was—containing inflation or preventing recession, he said.

Reuters

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Analysts suggest encore to botched 2000 forecasts

NEW YORK—Investors, still smarting from the botched forecasts that Wall Street experts made when tech stocks were soaring, are also being asked to swallow some questionable remarks on the way down.

Thanks to a steady diet of bad news like this past week's grim update from Yahoo!, investment analysts seem to be getting much better at painting a gruesome outlook about the companies they follow.

But they still seemed to reach some puzzling conclusions amid the predictable flood of reductions in profit forecasts, investment ratings and price targets that followed Yahoo!'s warning Wednesday that 2001 earnings would fall well below Wall Street's expectations.

Yahoo!'s stock, already bludgeoned to nearly a tenth of its $250 peak, closed Friday at $26.50. Yet the latest analyst updates, which recommend that investors "hold" onto their Yahoo! shares, predict a loss of at least $10, or more than 40 percent.

On Thursday, for example, the investment firm Jefferies & Co. issued a report in which analyst Frederick Moran cut his rating on Yahoo! from "buy" to "hold." Yet at the same time, he slashed his company's price target for the stock from $45 to $15.

At Lehman Brothers, without calling it a price target, analyst Holly Becker wrote that Yahoo! might be worth only $14 per share, or perhaps $18. Yet, she maintained her investment opinion at "neutral." The story was much the same at SG Cowen, where analyst Scott Reamer calculated Yahoo! might be worth just $15 by one measure but concluded that his rating would remain "steadfastly neutral."

Huh?

At least one analyst, however, seemed to see the emperor's new clothes for what they weren't.

Christopher Dixon at UBS Warburg concurred with the steep price drop suggested by the other analysts, but also slashed his investment rating from "strong buy" to "reduce," a term most would define as "Sell! Yahoo!"

The most widely accepted reasoning for these seemingly bizarre ratings was that since analysts rarely issued a "sell" recommendation, a "neutral" opinion should be seen as extremely negative.

With the exception of Moran at Jefferies, efforts to contact the aforementioned analysts by phone and e-mail were unsuccessful Friday.

"Yahoo was perceived as having unabated powerful growth, but now it looks like they'll have negative growth this year and slower growth beyond. So they no longer can command the valuations that investors had thought Yahoo was worthy of," he said.

"The rating reflects that long-term, this company will be OK," said Moran.

There's nothing new, of course, about the reluctance of Wall Street analysts to issue a "sell" rating on a stock—a move that might inspire a company with investment banking needs to bring that business to a Wall Street firm with friendlier opinions. Analysts are also hesitant to use such dire ratings because they don't want to strand customers who they previously advised to buy the stock in question.

One of the more celebrated examples of these dueling pressures came in November 1999, when Salomon Smith Barney telecommunications analyst Jack Grubman reversed his long-bearish stance on AT&T Corp., upgrading his opinion to "buy."

The timing of that decision was doubly uncanny, coming just as AT&T was deciding which investment banks might run the initial public offering of $10.6 billion worth of stock in AT&T's wireless operations—and at a time when AT&T's stock was worth more than double its current value. In the epilogue to this story, AT&T eventually hired Salomon Smith Barney for the IPO, and Grubman downgraded the stock twice this past October, first to "accumulate," then to "neutral."

The Dow ended the week at 10,525.38, down 1.3 percent following Friday's 84.17-point loss.

The Nasdaq rose 9.1 percent to 2,626.50 for the week, lowered by a 14.07-point drop Friday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index was up 1.5 percent for the week after sliding 8.50 to 1,318.32 on Friday.

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Jumbo IPOs slated for 2001 may help offset IPO slump

NEW YORK—Call it the Year of the Jumbo.

After a year when fledgling companies dominated the market for initial stock sales, 2001 promises a raft of large offerings from household names, including Philip Morris Co.'s Kraft Foods Inc. and Verizon Wireless Inc.

Jumbo sales of about $50 billion—or half of last year's record proceeds—are in the works, with the bulk comprising telecommunications companies from around the globe looking to raise money for acquisitions, expansion and new technology.

"These are benchmark deals and will set the tone" for the rest of the market, David McMillan, director of capital markets at Lazard Freres & Co., said.

For Goldman, Sachs & Co., Merrill Lynch & Co. and other top underwriters, the mammoth offerings stand to buttress underwriting revenue at a time when bankers expect fewer IPOs. They have already lined as many as 10 initial sales worth at least $3 billion each compared with just five last year.

Underwriting fees fell in the second half of 2000 as investors snubbed the plethora of young technology IPOs they had embraced in the months before as the Nasdaq composite index tumbled. The Nasdaq slumped 50 percent since March, resulting in an average 18-percent loss from IPOs last year.

While stocks have regained some ground from their lows of last year, many investors are still sitting on losses, making any IPO a tough sell.

"We expect this year to be more rational, a smaller number than last year," said Bill Brady, head of equities in Credit Suisse First Boston's technology group, which took 72 companies public last year, more than any other firm.

While about 120 IPOs are tentatively scheduled for the first quarter, many are still small technology companies that won't be able to complete sales.

So far this year, more than 10 companies have withdrawn their IPO plans while no IPOs are scheduled until the week after next when Deutsche Banc Alex Brown is slated to bring Align Technology Inc.'s $160-million sale and UBS Warburg plans to complete Xenogen Corp.'s $84-million offering.

Telecommunications companies planning big IPOs include Verizon Wireless and Cingular Wireless, the top two US mobile phone companies, as well as China Telecommunications Corp. and Taiwan's Chunghwa Telecom Co. Deutsche Telekom AG and Royal KPN NV are also expected to sell shares in their wireless businesses later this year.

France Telecom's 7-billion-euro ($6.7-billion) IPO of its Orange SA wireless unit will be first off the rank for telecommunications firms when it begins selling later this month.

"There are some large international telecom deals about to be launched and the market is waiting with bated breath," said McMillan at Lazard Freres.

Outside of that industry, food, beverage and tobacco giant Philip Morris is planning a partial sale of its Kraft Foods unit through Credit Suisse First Boston and Salomon Smith Barney Inc. That may end up eclipsing AT&T Wireless Group's record $10.6-billion sale of last year. Lucent Technologies Inc. is planning a part sale of its Agere Systems Inc. microelectronics unit, which could reap $8 billion or more, through Morgan Stanley.

Orange, which plans its sale in mid-February, will set the tone for the rest of the offerings, investors and bankers say. If the issue doesn't drum up support from buyers, it may force others to hold off their plans. Orange's sale has already been sliced in half and France Telecom adds an exchangeable bond to the sale as it struggles to find enough investors willing to buy the stock.

The most recent large wireless IPO, AT&T Wireless Group, hasn't fared well since its $10.6-billion sale in April. The shares closed below their IPO price on all but eight days since they were sold for $29.50 each on April 26. They're trading at $24.69, down 16 percent from the IPO price.

Other comparable stocks have fallen even more. Sprint Corp. and Nextel Communications Inc. have lost more than half their value in six months.

Verizon, planning a $5-billion IPO, and Nextel International Inc., slated to raise $810 million, have already delayed their sales, initially planned for last year, and haven't set a new date.

The expected sales don't include likely secondary share sales from companies that are already public.

Notwithstanding their price drops, Sprint and Nextel Partners Inc. may seek to sell more shares this year, investors said. Japan's NTT DoCoMo Inc., the world's No. 2 cell phone company, plans to sell up to $800 billion ($6.8 billion) of new shares next month.

"There's a lot of paper coming out in the wireless area," said Bill Turner, telecommunications analyst at Banc One Investment Advisors Inc.

Still, with relatively few wireless investments to choose from—AT&T Wireless, Sprint, Nextel and Vodafone being the main large companies—investors are keen for more.

"There's not that much out there to choose from," said Turner, who said he's likely to invest in many of the sales by US wireless companies. "I think it will get absorbed."

Bloomberg

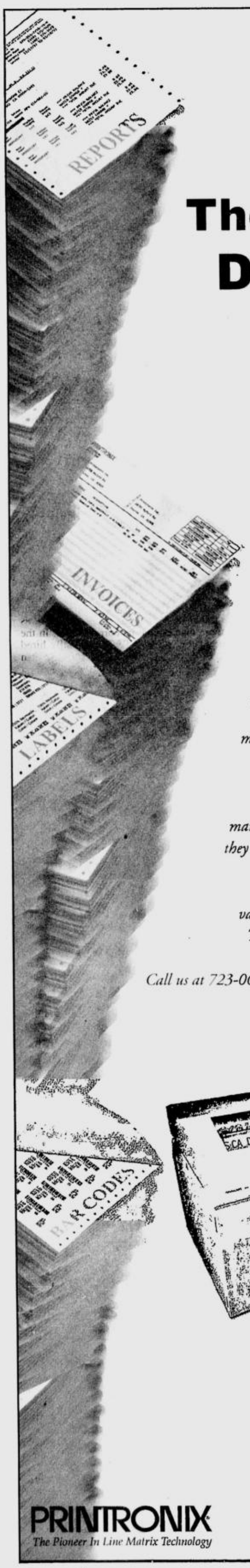
Bangko Sentral sees lower interest rates

(From page B22)

government's borrowing rates today as reflected by the benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate as well as bank lending rates.

The central bank had raised its policy rates by four percentage points in October last year following the negative impact of the Juetengate scandal on investor confidence as reflected by a huge decline in the value of the peso.

Allegations that Mr. Estrada had received more than P400 million in "jueteng" payoffs and kickbacks from tobacco taxes had pulled down the peso to a historic low of 51.48 to $1 on Oct. 30 last year.



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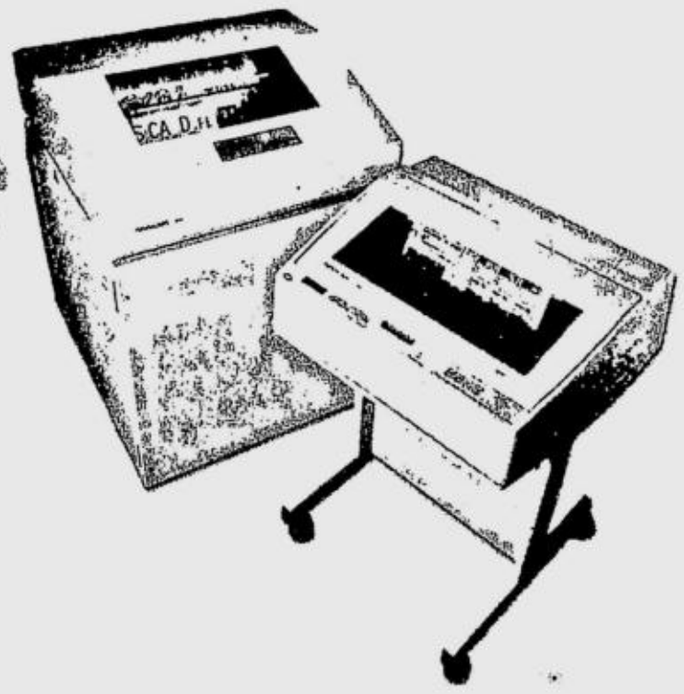

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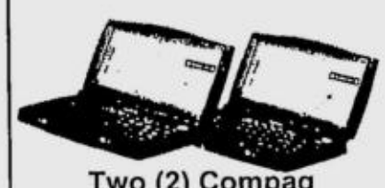

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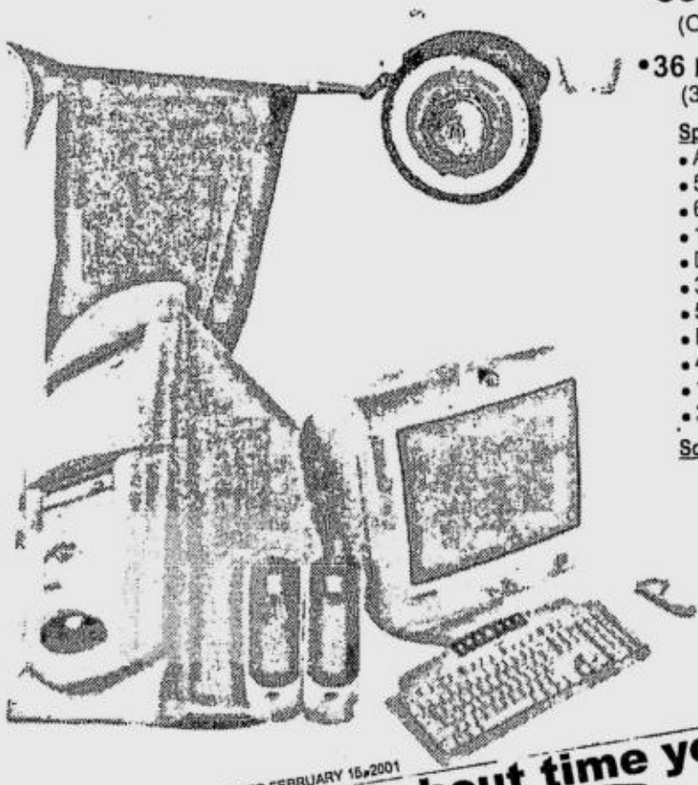

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NO DOOM AND GLOOM

Slow US won't halt Asia growth, IMF says

TOKYO—International Monetary Fund chief Horst Koehler has said that while the US economic slowdown will affect Asia, the region's recovery wouldn't be derailed.

"Asia will be affected by the US slowdown," Koehler told the Japan National Press Club in Tokyo. "The impact will be greater in those countries with a higher orientation toward exports, especially electronics, to the US. But overall, I don't expect the Asian recovery to be derailed."

Koehler met with the local press prior to last week's Asia-Europe Finance Minister's meeting in Kobe, southwest of Tokyo. Finance ministers from 25 European and Asian nations were expected to discuss how to best protect their economies against the effects of a global economic slowdown.

"I'd consider such a slowdown more as a normalization than a cause for doom and gloom, and justifying neither panic nor frantic actions," Koehler said.

The IMF has cut its forecast for US growth in 2001 to 2.5 percent from 3.2 percent, predictions that are in line with new projections the Clinton administration has issued.

The IMF expects growth of around 5 percent for Asia outside Japan this year compared to around 8 percent in 2000. A slowing US economy will probably dampen Americans' demand for imports, especially from Asia.

US Federal Reserve policymakers last week acted to stave off recession and keep the record US expansion on track by cutting the overnight bank lending rate a half-percentage point to 6 percent.

It was the first rate cut in two years and was announced between the December and January meetings of the Fed's Open Market Committee. Many investors had been speculating the Fed might cut rates at its January meeting.

Koehler praised the rate cut, saying it would "help ensure a soft landing," for the US economy. "If necessary, there is quite a lot of further room for maneuver in both monetary and fiscal policy to maintain growth," he said.

Japan

On Japan's economic outlook, Koehler said by continuing to implement structural reforms, it would stay "on the road to coming back as a powerful source of growth in Asia and the world."

"For Japan, I expect continued recovery, albeit at a moderate pace," Koehler said. "This growth will still provide a stabilizing influence for the region."

Still, he warned Japan should implement faster structural reforms, mainly among corporations and banks, to boost efficiency.

Koehler described Japan's increasing debts as "a burden." Still, "comments suggesting that Japan could be bankrupted are totally exaggerated," he said. "There isn't now a situation of an exaggerated panic."

In the past decade, Japan has spent trillions of yen to bring the world's No. 2 economy out of recession following the collapse of the bubble economy in the early 1990s. Still, this spending has only swelled Japan's public sector debt rather than produce a self-sustained recovery, where growth is led by private demand, not from state spending.

Japan's public debt, including both the central and local governments, will reach ¥666 trillion ($5.65 trillion) in the year ending March 2002, equal to about 130 percent of gross domestic product, the highest among the Group of Seven industrialized nations, according to the Ministry of Finance figures.

Yen

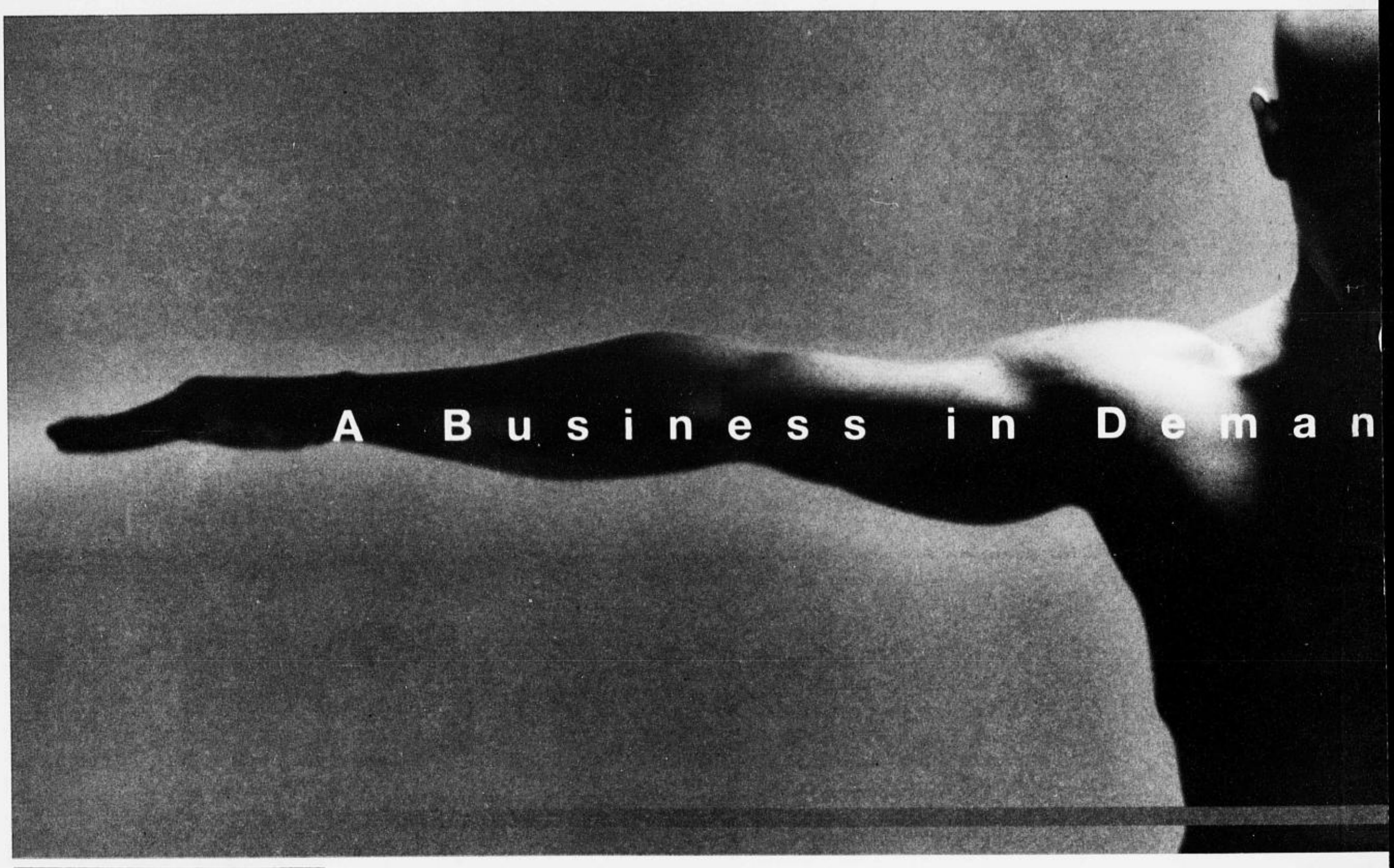
Asked about the current level of the yen, Koehler said it was not much of a concern.

"I'm not too concerned about the depreciation of the yen, and we should let the market work," Koehler said. "I appreciate very much that the euro is getting stronger and the dollar is getting weaker. This reflects the correction it needed. What we need is the orderly correction of these imbalances, but I see a good chance that this will happen."

The yen hovered near an 18-month low against the dollar. The yen was at 118.48 to the dollar from 117.67 late yesterday. It has fallen against the dollar in nine weeks of the last 10.

The euro was trading at 95.21 US cents, compared with 95.36 yesterday. It has risen against the dollar in six of the last seven weeks.

Bloomberg



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Aside from Broadband Wireless Technology, Broadband Philippines will also be using Fiber Optics, the ultimate solution to Internet and data networks. With Fiber Optics Technology, glass threads are used to transmit data using light as a medium. In addition, data is transmitted digitally (the natural form of computer data) rather than in analog form. This technology greatly increases speed of transmission by multiples of thousands.

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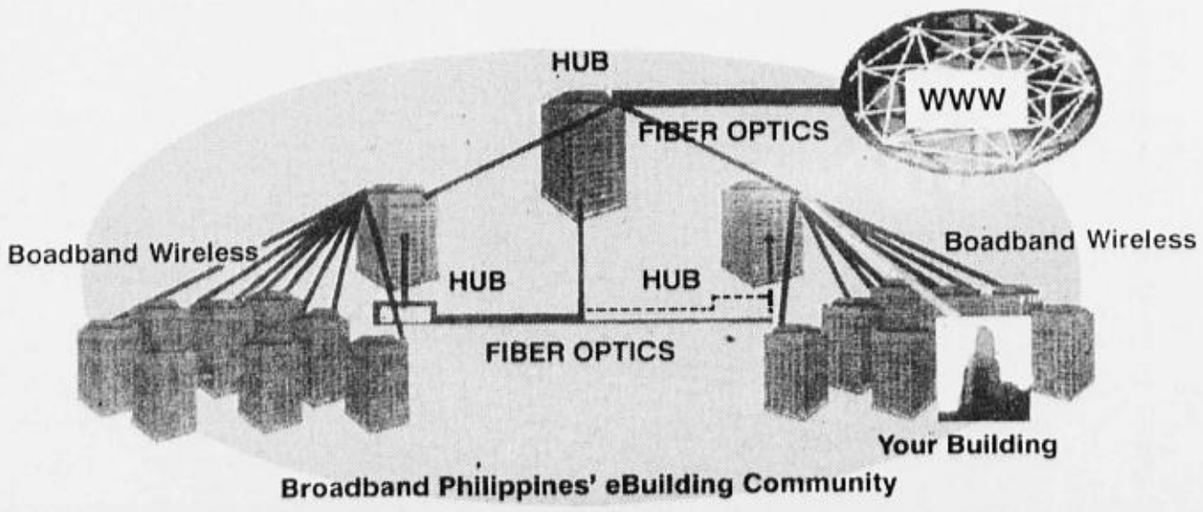


Bro

With all the talk about Broadband lately, freelance writer Maelyn M. Angulo recently sat down with Broadband Philippines Chairman and CEO Joey de Venecia and their VP for Marketing Martin Nery to find out more about the company's plans.

Angulo: What is broadband?

De Venecia: Broadband communications is the next step in integrating Philippine corporations with the world. It changes the way we do business. You're able to transfer data files at very high speed. You are able to manage communication processes in a more efficient way at less cost.

Broadband is basically a highway that we are setting up. On this highway, companies can work as one. If you have a company and you want to communicate with your sales teams, you can meet with them in virtually one location using this broadband highway. You can have five remote offices having video conferences with the sales manager to plan sales strategies for the day or for the week. Top managers can have video conferences with anyone in the organization at any given time.

You will need at least a 384 kbps (thousand bits of data per second) link from a telecommunications company to be able to do video conferencing. And that's very expensive. For small and medium enterprises, it's very costly. That is what we are planning to address.

Angulo: How do you plan to introduce broadband in the Philippines?

De Venecia: Broadband Philippines is the first telecommunication operator in the country that will use both wired and wireless technologies. On the first-mile connection to the customers, it is what you call the broadband wireless or the wireless protocol whose quality is equivalent to fiber optics. Our value proposition is we will be delivering fiber optic quality communication to customers to enable them to do a wide array of services like video conferencing; set up private networks, have faster Internet connectivity, and other things at very reasonable cost. Since our network will be both wired and wireless, we are able to effectively lower our charges to customers.

Web economy continues to grow, new study says

WASHINGTON—The Internet economy grew at a healthy clip over the past year to the point where it now provides more jobs than the insurance industry and brings in one of every five dollars in revenue, according to a study released Friday.

And despite doom-and-gloom reports from Wall Street, that growth is not expected to slow as mainstream businesses integrate the Internet into their everyday operations, the study's authors said.

"From our point of view, we see a bright future and, for companies, a profitable future," said Andrew Whinston, director of the University of Texas' Center for Research in Electronic Commerce, which conducted the study.

In their report, Whinston and associate director Anitesh Barua looked beyond the troubled dotcom sector to examine how traditional services and manufacturing companies were integrating the Internet into their operations.

They found that Internet startup companies such as Amazon.com played a relatively minor role, bringing in only 9.6 percent of all online revenues and employing 15.6 percent of employees whose jobs were related to the Internet. Online operations of traditional service and manufacturing firms such as Boeing Co. accounted for the bulk of electronic business, the study said.

The Internet economy added 612,000 new jobs over the first six months of 2000, the study found, and now supported 3 million workers.

Seven out of 10 of these jobs were nontechnical positions in fields such as sales and marketing, administration and manufacturing, according to the study.

Revenue growth was strong as well. Whinston and Barua projected $830 billion in revenues for the sector in 2000, a 58-percent increase over 1999 and a 158-percent increase over 1998's revenues of $323 billion.

The authors noted that revenues grew twice as fast as employment in the sector, suggesting strong productivity gains.

Because of these productivity gains, most companies would continue to invest in Internet operations even if the economy slowed, Whinston said.

Improving efficiency was the best way for a company to tighten its belt, he said: "From our point of view, it would make sense for a company, when times get more challenging, to look carefully at how to improve performance."

Application service providers and wireless networks would also encourage companies to continue to invest in Internet technology, he said.

The study found that many companies had just begun to move their operations online. For example, 90 percent of the firms surveyed did not have the capability to handle their supply chains over the Internet, Whinston said. *Reuters*

Sun Micro growth to slow

NEW YORK—Wall Street is showing the first cracks in its bullish outlook for Sun Microsystems Inc.

Salomon Smith Barney Inc. analyst John Jones said the maker of server computers and software to run websites would not be able to keep sales growing as quickly as in past quarters. He cut his recommendation on Sun to "neutral" from "buy."

The call made Salomon the only one among Wall Street's 20 largest firms to rate Sun less than "buy." For its part, Sun was among the few large technology companies that had not indicated sales or profit growth would disappoint investors.

Jones said Sun was poised for the same slowdown as everybody else. The company's sales growth could fall to the single digits over the next two to three quarters, he said in an interview.

"We've expected a deceleration of growth rates in Sun because they'd attained a level that was completely unsustainable," said Jones, who ranked third among enterprise hardware analysts in Institutional Investor magazine's survey of money managers.

According to Bloomberg data, 23 analysts rated Sun "buy" and three rated it "hold," the same category as "neutral." Among smaller Wall Street firms, Arthur Russell of Edward Jones & Co. has had a "hold" recommendation on Sun since March 2000 and the stock has fallen 39 percent in that time.

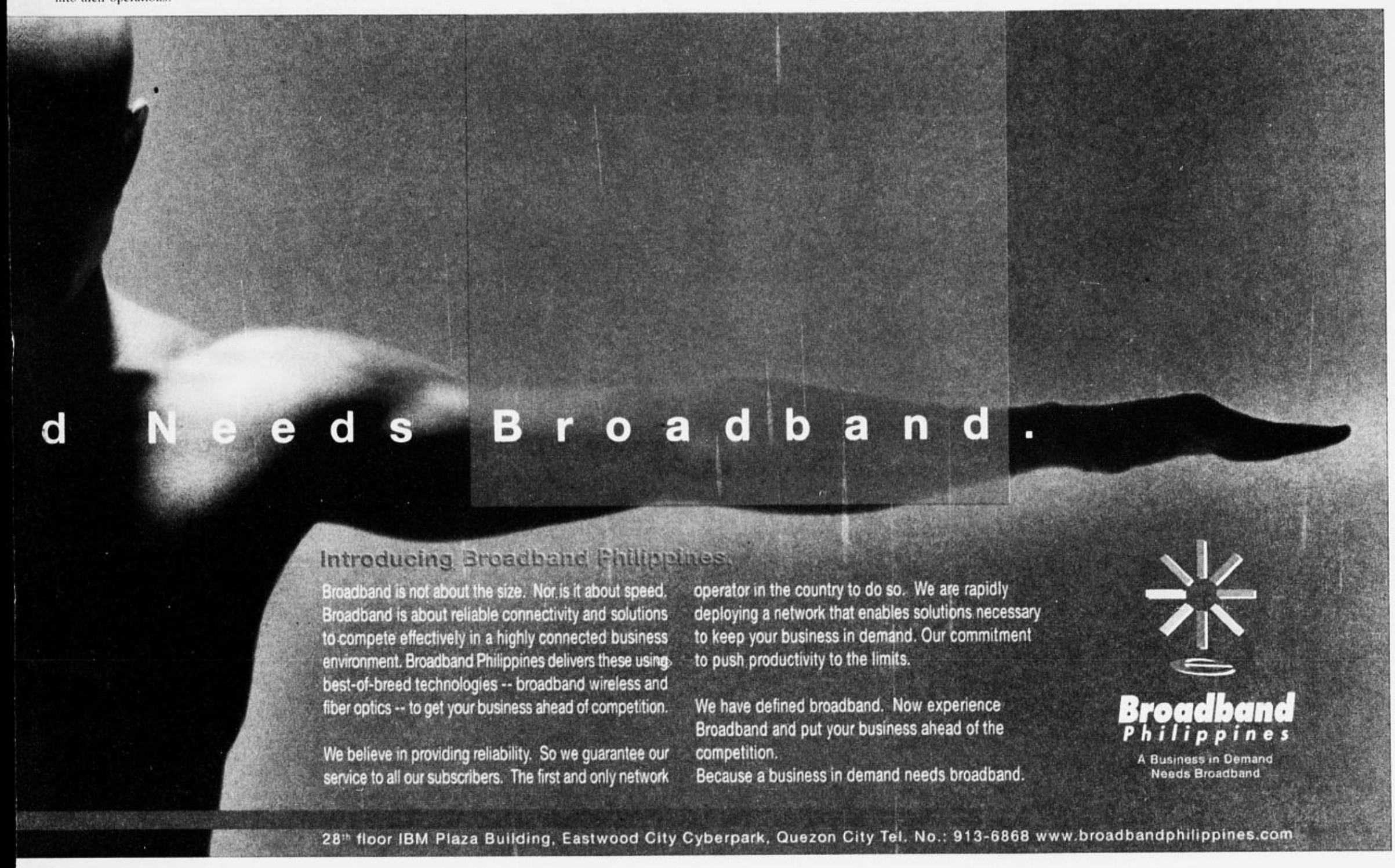
Last quarter, Sun's sales of hardware and software products grew 63 percent from a year earlier and services revenue rose 47 percent. New orders climbed 54 percent during the fiscal first quarter, the company said in October.

Investors should not expect to see that kind of performance again from Sun or its peers, Salomon Smith Barney's Jones said.

"This is not a market that grows at 50 percent," said Jones, who slashed his forecast for Sun Micro's shares in a year to $30 from $55. The stock had lost 50 percent from its Sept. 1 peak.

Analysts polled by First Call/Thomson Financial expect Sun's earnings to grow 37 percent this fiscal year, which ends in June, and 26 percent in fiscal 2002.

Profit growth for most other companies is slowing more than that. The companies in the Standard & Poor's 500 Index are likely to post earnings growth of 8.6 percent in 2001, down from 17.5 percent for 2000. *Bloomberg*



adband finally takes off in the Philippines.

DE VENECIA

When you look at the traditional telecommunications network, 70 percent of the cost of these networks is spent on diggings in the ground and on setting up cables. In our network we don't have those things. We put a broadband wireless radio on top of a building and invest on that building by cabling in that building and connecting customers in that building to our network. The value proposition there for building owners is we make their buildings broadband-ready.

Angulo: How would you describe the present telecommunications network we have in the country?

De Venecia: The present telecommunication infrastructure in the Philippines is not broadband but narrow band, because primarily it is for voice or phone calls. I remember when I was first connecting to the Internet, the modem speed I was using was 1200 baud and when it went up to 9.6 kbps, I was able to use the fax. When it went up to 14.4 kbps, I was able to do my e-mail yet it was still very slow. As the band became broader, we got new applications such as surfing the Internet. When we continue to improve the size of the highway, the size of the pipe, we can do more complex things.

That is why we have positioned ourselves to apply best-of-breed technologies to be able to address the expanding needs of corporations in the Philippines. Let's say you want to transfer the engineering design of an entire building, say a 20-megabit file, you'll need at least eight hours to do that using today's telecom infrastructure. Secondly, since our telecom infrastructure is really for voice and not for data, you'll be lucky if you'll be able to complete that process. Sometimes the line just gets dropped and you have to download it again. In our network, we do that task in one minute because the capacity is so vast and broad.

Angulo: What is your company's focus right now?

Nery: Our aim is to service our corporate customers well. Thus, we are now focused on building the most reliable broadband Internet and data network in the country.

Angulo: Do you plan to offer your services to households?

De Venecia: Broadband services are more concentrated with the corporate side. Our business model is building-centric, that is, we invest in buildings which house our corporate customers. We are currently deploying our network in Metro Manila, wiring buildings and putting radios on these buildings. We are creating an **e Building community** within our network. We're addressing the corporate market because this is really the driver of our economy. The performance of these companies will bring the economic benefits down to their employees.

Angulo: Do you think broadband will spur the growth of the Internet in the Philippines?

De Venecia: The growth of the Internet is driven by two things. First is the price of computers. It has not really gone down. If you'll buy a multimedia computer now, you'll have to spend 20-plus thousand or more. With the disposable income of the Filipinos, we're not there yet, unlike our neighbors. So computer penetration in the Philippines has not taken off as fast as in other countries. Second, the telecom infrastructure is not really there. It's there but the quality is really for voice, not for data transmission. In order to drive Internet usage and growth, the proper broadband infrastructure is necessary.

NERY

Angulo: There are other broadband providers that are coming out lately. What makes your company different?

Nery: It is our belief that technology will continue to improve and that we need to have an ALL-NEW network in place that was designed for broadband from the start. It is not meant to disparage other technologies but we feel that not having to upgrade old networks means a brand new network that is broadband inside and out, a service that grows with the customers needs. It is also our belief that old networks designed for things other than broadband can only be upgraded so much until it hits the limit. You cannot force true broadband into copper infrastructure, which is primarily designed for voice calls. There is only so much copper can do.

In fact, we are so confident about the technologies we are deploying and its reliability that we are willing to provide a guarantee of availability of service to all our customers across the board—a first in the Philippines.

TÜV Rheinland

TÜV

TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd.
THE PIONEERING ISO CERTIFYING BODY IN THE PHILIPPINES

marks 10th year Anniversary In The Philippines

MESSAGES

MESSAGE FROM THE GROUP ASIA

In January 18, 1991 TÜV Rheinland Japan, Ltd. opened its Subsidary Office in Manila for we are aware of the strategic importance for TÜV Rheinland to be present in the Philippines.

We expected the Philippine economy to continue its upswing trend. That is why we opened another branch office in Cebu in June 1998. TÜV Rheinland had the opportunity to help export companies achieve the necessary certification needed in order to be prepared and competitive in the European Market. This resulted in a prosperous development of TÜV Rheinland in the Philippines, exceeding our expectations set in 2001.

I would like to congratulate the Officers and Staff of TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd. which is celebrating its 10th Year Anniversary on January 18, 2001 for their outstanding achievements.

I wish them to continue their commitment to the Philippine business community in their pursuit of global excellence.

In this regard, I would like to thank all valued customers, especially the long-term customers, as well as our co-operation partners in making this success possible.

Let us enter the new millennium in a meaningful partnership and participate in the prosperous development of the Philippine economy.

Ralf Wilde
President, TÜV Rheinland Group Asia

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

Our warmest greetings to the Officers and members of the TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd., as you celebrate your 10th year Anniversary on January 18, 2001.

Fostering global competitiveness is imperative to all industries in the Philippines, if our country is to survive and remain at par with its counterparts in a fast emerging borderless global market. TÜV Rheinland as one of the certification bodies in the Philippines is no exception to this requirement. The quality of service they provide to ensure that the public gets the best value for their money by way of issuing certification to achieve Quality and Environmental Management Systems and/or Product Quality and Safety, would surely help us achieve our goal of competing in the global market. With these, TÜV Rheinland and the DTI share a common commitment, which is to protect the interest of the buying public.

We clearly see that a steady partnership between our industries and government is imperative to a nation's progress and development. This partnership and the measures to be taken entail a lot of responsibility and hard work, but each step is a step paving the way towards a truly progressive nation.

We, in the DTI encourage TÜV Rheinland and other certification bodies that are not yet accredited with the Bureau of Product Standards to obtain your accreditation now. By doing so, you will be doing your part in promoting product quality standards while protecting the welfare of our consumers.

Congratulations to TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd. for their 10 years of worthwhile operation in the Philippines.

Mabuhay!

Thomas G. Aquino
Acting Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

My warmest congratulations to TÜV Rheinland Philippines on its 10th anniversary.

As a multinational company who helps propel and uplift the Philippines economy by certifying its manufacturing and services towards quality, Environmental Management Systems and Product Quality/Safety, it only shows that TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Inc. is one of a growing number of firms who has recognized that caring for the environment is good business.

By being environmentally responsible, TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Inc. has distinguished itself from its competition on the basis of both product quality and environmental performance. For this stance, cleaner production processes, more recyclable designs, and new ways of delivering services with low material throughput represent aggressive investments in a changing marketplace where environmental values have greater business currency.

It is my hope that with your involvement in the Philippine economy, your environmental proactive stance would influence and inspire other businesses in the way they do business under a regime of sustainable development. As a truly sustainable enterprise, we hope your achievements will be matched by the vast number of small-and medium-sized enterprises which presently lack the knowledge, resources and the commitment to make significant contributions to sustainable development.

To the officers and employees behind TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd. accept our warmest congratulations and our sincerest wish for continuing success.

Antonio H. Cerilles
Secretary

Republic of the Philippines DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT MANILA

On behalf of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), let me extend my warmest greetings and congratulations to the officers and staff of TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd on the occasion of its 10th Anniversary Celebration on January 18, 2001.

Since establishing its branch office in the Philippines a decade ago, TÜV Rheinland has remained steadfast in its commitment to help boost the economy of our country. It has consistently played an indispensable role in ensuring the access of our local companies in all sectors of the industry to the lucrative global market through certifying their Quality Management and/or Environmental Management Systems of companies. Their system translates to a cost effective and highly productive enterprise at the same time demonstrating corporate social responsibility.

As another year is added to its fruitful existence, it is our fervent hope that the firm continue to grow and take a more active role in harnessing and uplifting the quality system of our industries.

Mabuhay and more power to TÜV Rheinland!

Bienvenido E. Laguesma
Secretary

Pioneering clients to be feted at Makati Shangri-La

The 'TÜV Rheinland Group, an internationally-acclaimed ISO Certifying Body, celebrates today its 10th Year of service in the Philippines. Based in Cologne, Germany, the TÜV Rheinland Group has over 9000 full-time employees in 90 offices in over 40 countries worldwide.

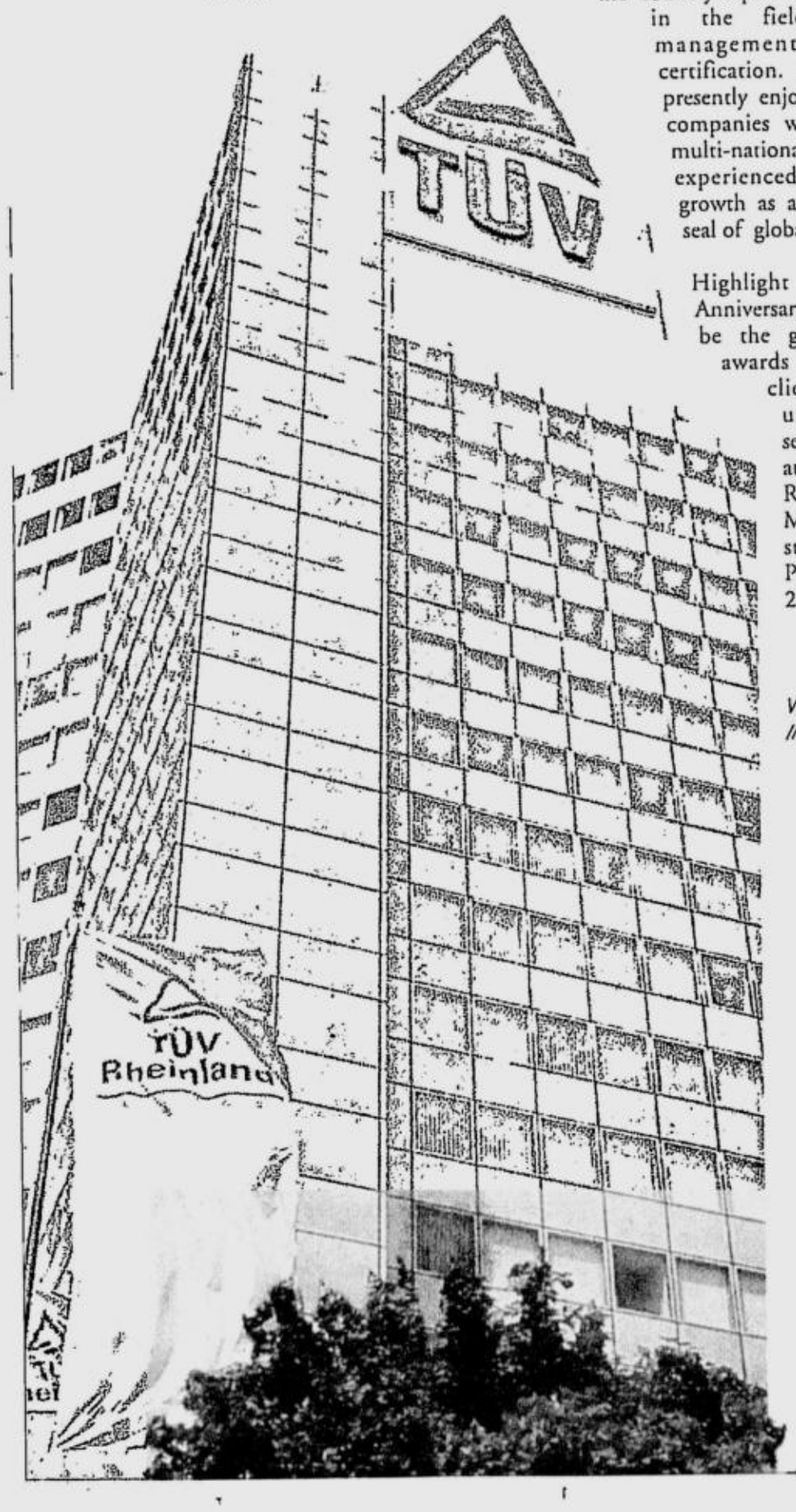
TÜV Rheinland Top Executives in Cologne, Germany

While just passing its first decade in the country, TÜV Rheinland has already accumulated over 128 years of expertise in the fields of testing, inspection, certification and quality assurance. In the Philippines, TÜV Rheinland is represented by TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd., which is part of the TÜV Rheinland Group Asia that serves Japan, Taiwan, Hongkong, China, Korea, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd. is one of the country's pioneering institutions in the fields of quality management system certification. Its services are presently enjoyed by over 160 companies which mostly are multi-national firms and have experienced tremendous growth as a result of TÜV's seal of global approval.

Highlight of the 10th Anniversary celebrations will be the giving of special awards to pioneering clients and the unveiling of services to be held at the Quezon and Rizal Ballrooms of Makati Shangri-La starting at 2:00 P.M. on 18 January 2001.

Officers and Staff of TÜV Rheinland Philippines, Ltd.



Website http: // www.tuv.com

Parity with the world's best

Since 1991, TÜV Rheinland has seen Philippine manufacturers grow to be among the world's best. And for ten years now, these manufacturers have looked to TÜV Rheinland for the certification so essential to their international credibility.

Accredited by regulatory/approval organizations all over the world, TÜV Rheinland provides an international service network that delivers "One-Stop Full Service" to firms doing business globally. The company is a trusted resource both for international buyers as well as local manufacturers.

Today, TÜV Rheinland has already certified some of the country's leading manufacturers and other institutions. These include EMC Computer Systems (formerly Data General Philippines), the pioneering Certified Company to International Quality System Standard in the Philippines since 1992; Hitachi Computer Products (Asia) Corp., the first ISO 14001 Certified Computer Company in the Philippines; St. Paul University in Tuguegarao City, the first ISO 9001 Certified University in the Philippines; De La Salle University Medical Center, the first ISO 9001 Certified Hospital in the Philippines; ALSTOM Philippines, Inc. (Operation and Maintenance), the first ISO 9002 & ISO 14001 Certified Power Plant in the Philippines; Allegro Microsystems Phils., Inc., the first QS-9000 Certified Company in the Philippines; Fujitsu-Ten Philippines, the first Company Certified to Multiple Standards: ISO 9000, ISO 14000 and QS-9000 in the Philippines; CS Garments, Inc., the first ISO 9002 Certified Garment Factory in the Philippines; DURU's Industries Corporation, the first Company to have received Product Safety Certification in the Philippines; FORD Motor Company Philippines, Inc., the first Car Manufacturing Company in the Philippines Certified to ISO 14001; STAR Motor Manufacturing Industries, Inc., the first Car Manufacturing Company in the Philippines Certified to ISO 9002 .

The Value of Certification

Unclear to many, ISO and other forms of certification provided by organizations like TÜV Rheinland play a very important role in the acceptance of products and services in the global market, influencing overall economic growth.

In the Philippines, TÜV Rheinland provides the following forms of Certification and related services as follows:

Certification and Third Party Auditing Services

- ISO 9000, QS-9000 (TS 16949) Quality Management System
- ISO 14001 Environmental Management System
- SA 8000 Social Accountability
- OHS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety
- TL 9000 Telecommunication Quality System

TÜV Rheinland Academy

- Public Seminars on Quality Systems
- Allied Management Training Courses

Product Safety Testing and Issue of Certificate

- Product Safety Certification per Country or Region
- Calibration on Measuring and Test Equipment
- Product Safety Certificate & CB Report

Environmental & Energy Third Party Audit Services

Quality Assurance

- Pre-shipment Inspection
- In-coming Inspection

PROGRAM GUIDE

QUEZON / RIZAL BALLROOMS, SHANGRI-LA, MAKATI
18 January 2001

PART I - ISO 9000:2000 ORIENTATION
QUEZON C BALLROOM

2:00 - 2:30 PM	Reception / Registration of Guests
2:30 - 5:30	Orientation
3:30 - 4:00	Coffee Break (Snack)

PART II - ENTERTAINMENT / AWARDS NIGHT
RIZAL A & B BALLROOM

6:00 - 7:00 PM	Registration
7:00 - 7:03	Invocation to be led by Mr.Rene Julian
7:03 - 7:06	Philippine National Anthem
7:06 - 8:10	Dinner
8:25 - 8:30	Welcome Remarks by TÜV Rheinland Executive namely: MR. MICHAEL JANECKE, Director TÜV Rheinland Phils. and MR. SCHWEINFURTER, TÜV Rheinland Southeast Asia Director
8:30 - 8:35	Symbolic Toast Together with the TÜV Executives
8:35 - 8:40	Acknowledgment of Sponsors to Print Ads last January 15, 2001
8:40 - 8:45	AVP: TÜV Rheinland Philippines and Services
8:45 - 8:52	Speaker #1 Dir. Jesus Motoomull, DTI/BPS
8:52 - 8:55	Speaker # 2 Honorable Secretary Antonio Cerilles, DENR
8:55 - 9:00	Awarding of Pioneering Clients
9:00 - 9:15	Song Number from guest MS. LUCHIE HUANG
9:15 - 9:20	Speaker #3 Honorable Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma, DOLE
9:20 - 9:25	Speaker #4 Director General Atty. Lilia B. De Lima, PEZA
9:25 - 9:35	Awarding of Outstanding Employees
9:35 - 9:45	Distribution of Plaques of Appreciation
9:45 -9:50	Raffle
9:50 -9:55	Dance Number
9:55 - 10:00	Closing Spiels PROGRAM CLOSES

Greetings from:

TÜV

Allegro™
MicroSystems Philippines, Inc.
First ISO 9002/QS-9000 TÜV-Certified Company in the Philippines

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KSS
PHILIPPINES, INC.

New Cebu Township One Special Ecozone
Barangay Cantao-an, Naga, Cebu, Philippines
Tels.: (032) 272-8191 to 96

Congratulations from:

ENGTEK PHILIPPINES, INC.
Lot 10 Phase II-A, SEPZ, Carmelray
Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna

inchem
INTERNATIONAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES, INC.
Manila Office: 317 San Fernando St., Binondo Manila
Plant Address: Km. 32 Mc Arthur Highway
Bo. Tuktukan, Guiguinto, Bulacan

ST. PAUL UNIVERSITY
Mabini St., Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, Phils.

TDK
TDK Philippines Corporation
119 East Science Avenue
Special Export Processing Zone,
Laguna Technopark, Binan, Laguna

TOSHIBA
TOSHIBA INFORMATION EQUIPMENT (PHILS.), INC.
103 East Main Ave. Ext., Special Export Processing Zone,
Laguna Technopark, Binan, Laguna Phils.

More Power from:

EMC² COMPUTER SYSTEMS PHILS., INC.

ELECTRONICS INDUSTRIES CORPORATION

GNF (PHILIPPINES), INC.

HAYAKAWA Group of Companies
HEPC Hayakawa Electronics (Phils.) Corp. (Wire Harness)
HCTI Hayakawa Component Technologies, Inc. (Component Assemblies and FCB Soldering)
HST HS Technologies (Phils.) Inc. (Metal Press Parts)

Katayama Textile Manila Corp.

LAGUNA DAI-ICHI, INC.

NITTO-NISTEM (PHILIPPINES), CORPORATION

nobile Inc.

PKI Pilipinas Kyohritsu Inc.

TEAM PACIFIC CORPORATION

Compliments from: FSI **FIBRE SORTING, INC.** • HENKEL **HENKEL PHILIPPINES, INC.** • **LUZON** ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY, INC.
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• **PLASTMANN** INDUSTRIAL CORP. • PMI **PRICON MICROELECTRONICS, INC.**
• **SAMPO** TECHNOLOGY (PHILS.), INC. SAMPO GROUP • SENGA **SENGA PHILIPPINES, INC.** • **YEAR JAN** INDUSTRIAL CORP.

10th year Anniversary In The Philippines

China WTO talks hit snag over subsidies

GENEVA—China, against opposition from the United States and key farm produce-exporting nations, angrily insisted on Friday it must have the right to boost agricultural subsidies on joining the World Trade Organization.

And, in a clear a warning that this could be a real barrier to concluding the 14-year talks in the near future, top Chinese WTO negotiator Long Yongtu said the issue was crucial for his country and described the anti-subsidy stance as "nonsense."

The problem emerged after three days of discussions in a week-long session that WTO and Chinese officials had hoped would essentially wrap up the entry negotiations.

"China is still a big agricultural country. Some 900 million farmers still work in the fields," an angry Long told reporters after meeting privately with a top US official at the end of a meeting of the WTO working party on Chinese membership.

"For the poorer farmers, we have to preserve the right to subsidize production.

"Why should they deprive China of doing that?" he demanded. "It is an absolute nonsense. They should know the limit."

The US official, Don Phillips, declined all comment on the talks and diplomats from the 18-nation Cairns Group of developed and developing countries, whose economics were strongly dependent on agricultural exports, were not available.

A European Union source agreed agriculture was clearly a barrier to ending the talks but indicated that Brussels—under fire from the informal US-Cairns alliance over support to its own farmers—was not taking a hard line on the question.

The source said the European Union was concerned over issues like access to China for insurance companies, Beijing insistence that it must have time to merge separate goods inspection agencies for domestic and imported goods, and trading rights.

Diplomats say the Chinese want foreign firms to have a presence in the country for two years before they are granted the right to sell goods there, effectively making a hefty upfront investment before they can start trading.

"This would be impossible for our small- and medium-size firms who could not afford it but want to start trading straight away," the EU source said. *Reuters*

European economy on right track despite US slowdown

KOBE, Japan—The European Union said Saturday its economy was on the right track as falling oil prices and stable inflation offset the negative impact of a slowdown in the US economy.

Swedish Finance Minister Bosse Ringholm and Belgian Finance Minister Didier Reynders held talks with Japanese Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa ahead of an Asia-Europe Meeting here.

"The EU side raised the US economic slowdown as a negative factor" for Europe, a Japanese finance ministry official said after the meeting, which was also joined by European Central Bank vice president Christian Noyer.

"But they said there are some positive aspects, such as a recent decline in oil prices, stable inflation and the positive impact of the currency unification," the official said.

"As a whole, the European economy is heading in a positive direction," he said.

Miyazawa also underscored his concern, expressed in earlier talks with his South Korean counterpart, Jin Nyum, about the US economic slowdown's impact on Japanese and Asian economies but said the United States would escape a hard landing.

"Asia, as a whole, may be affected and Japan may be affected too," Miyazawa told his European partners, according to the official.

"But the chances of successfully achieving a soft landing appear to be higher than the possibility of a hard landing," Miyazawa said, citing the US Federal Reserve's aggressive reduction of interest rates this month.

Miyazawa and the three European officials also welcomed the euro's recovery on foreign-exchange markets but stopped short of specifying a desired level for the currency, the official said.

Sweden, a non-euro member, is the current president of the European Union. It will be succeeded by Belgium. *AFP*

Korea economy seen slowing

KOBE, Japan—South Korea's economy had been slowing down since the second quarter of last year and lower growth was expected for 2001, the country's finance and economy minister was quoted as saying Saturday.

"South Korea's economy grew about 9 percent in 2000, but there were signs that growth has slowed down since the second quarter," a senior official of Japan's Ministry of Finance quoted Nyum Jin as telling his Japanese counterpart, Kiichi Miyazawa.

They met ahead of a gathering of 25 Asian and European finance ministers in Japan's western city of Kobe.

Jin said many economists in South Korea expected economic growth for 2001 would be slightly lower than 9 percent.

Miyazawa was quoted as saying that activity in Japan's corporate sector had been brisk, but personal consumption, the biggest component of its economy, lagged behind.

The two finance ministers did not discuss North Korea, the Japanese finance ministry official said.

The Asia-Europe Meeting of finance ministers was expected to include discussions on economic conditions in the regions and currency exchange regimes. *Reuters*

Hewlett, HP co-founder, dies

PALO ALTO, California- -William Hewlett, co-founder and former president of Hewlett-Packard Co. died at home in his sleep Friday of natural causes He was 87 years old.

Together with David Packard, who died March 26, 1996, Hewlett founded Hewlett-Packard here in a one-car garage in 1939

Hewlett-Packard, which now has more than 88,500 employees, finished fiscal 2000 with $48.8 billion in revenues.

The legendary garage—designated the birthplace of Silicon Valley—is a California state historical landmark.

Hewlett-Packard's first product, the audio oscillator, was used to develop the state-of-the-art soundtrack for the Walt Disney movie "Fantasia." *AFP*

Intel may squeak by targets

SANTA CLARA, California—Intel Corp., the world's largest computer-chip maker, may squeak past reduced targets when it reports fourth-quarter sales and earnings Tuesday, according to analysts.

Profit is expected to be 38 cents a share, the average estimate of analysts polled by First Call/Thomson Financial. That's compared with a split-adjusted 35 cents a year earlier. Sales targets range from $8.55 billion to $8.75 billion, according to IBES International Inc., up from $8.21 billion.

A late-year slump in PC sales prompted Intel, Microsoft Corp. and other computer and software makers to cut estimates for the December quarter. Intel's report may signal what's coming from other industry stalwarts. Analysts expect the company to hold off on giving a precise forecast for 2001 until it's clear how severe the economic slowdown will be. *Bloomberg*

Banco Santander Philippines, Inc.
27/F Tower One, Ayala Triangle
Ayala Avenue, 1226 Makati City

A subsidiary of:
Grupo Santander Central Hispano

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(As of December 19, 2000)

ASSETS		AMOUNT
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	P	676,750,342
Due from Other Banks		2,130,958,019
Trading Account Securities		707,657,803
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments		724,452,325
Loans, Discounts & Advances-net		2,326,448,251
Equity Investments		5,000,100
Bank Premises, Furniture Fixtures & Equipment-net		30,957,714
Other Assets		164,745,422
TOTAL ASSETS		**P6,766,969,974**
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	628,750,356
Time Deposits		2,911,448,148
Due to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		1,308,914
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		1,343,268
Bills Payable		207,030,025
Other Liabilities		509,576,151
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	**4,259,456,862**
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	1,850,000,000
Capital Stock - Subscription Deposit		315,000,000
Surplus		341,757,694
Other Capital Accounts		755,418
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		**2,507,513,112**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	**6,766,969,974**
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Spot/Future Exchange Bought	P	14,792,307,250
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		15,288,651,654
Items Held for Safekeeping/Collaterals		5,079,508,750
Items Held in Trust		94,497,952
Outstanding Guarantees/Standby LC		315,897,000
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	**35,570,862,605**

OTHER INFORMATION*
Compliance with Magna Carta Law:

Prescribed Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Enterprises
Actual Compliance	6.1800%	2.2400%

Amount of Non-Performing Loans	P 133,438,000
Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio	4.25%
Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets	P 133,438,000
General provision for loan losses	P 15,253,180
Specific provision for loan losses	P 93,406,600
Return on Equity (ROE)	2.76%
Amount of DOSRI loans/advances	P 48,876,409
Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	1.56%
Amount of Past Due DOSRI loans/Advances	P –
Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/adv to total loan portfolio	–

*Amended to conform with Circular No.208 dated August 17, 1999 and Memorandum to all Banks dated November 29, 1999

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
CITY OF MAKATI)S.S

We, Vicente B. Castillo and Agnes B. Santos of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) VICENTE B. CASTILLO
President

(Sgd.) AGNES B. SANTOS
Financial Controller

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 4th day of January 2001 affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 14488843, issued at Makati City on February 24, 2000 and Residence Certificate No.07911931, issued at Pasig City on March 13, 2000.

(Sgd.) Jose Luis V Agcaoili
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2002
PTR No 1881691
Date Issued: January 6, 2000
Makati City
TIN 105-331-199

Doc No. 041
Book No. I
Page No 10
Series of 2001

SEC probing 30 to 40 funds

WASHINGTON—The Securities and Exchange Commission staff has narrowed its focus to 30 or 40 mutual funds in its examination of possible end-of-quarter portfolio manipulation in the United States, SEC compliance and inspections director Lori Richards has said.

An SEC task force, which began looking for signs of so-called portfolio pumping last year, is now examining roughly three dozen funds that tend to invest in small-capitalization or thinly traded securities and have shown signs of possible manipulation in all or most of six consecutive quarters.

Portfolio pumping occurs when fund managers try to boost a fund's end-of-quarter performance figures by buying more shares of a stock the fund already holds in an attempt to drive up the price—raising the value of its other shares.

Funds may be tempted to pump their portfolios because managers' bonuses may be based on yearend performance numbers, which also are cited in fund advertisements and prospectuses, investor groups say. Meanwhile, stocks driven higher at the end of a quarter are likely to fall when demand disappears on the first trading day of a new period, they say.

The SEC task force began its review in the United States after the Ontario Securities Commission brought a pumping case last year against a Royal Bank of Canada unit, Richards told mutual fund directors at a meeting in Washington. Ontario's case was the only one ever filed about alleged pumping, she told reporters following the session.

Royal Bank's RT Capital Management Inc. pension-management unit agreed last July to pay C$3.08 million ($2.05 million) to settle charges that fund managers worked with traders on the last days of several months and quarters to place last-minute, above-market orders to drive up prices for stocks they already held.

SEC rules require funds to disclose information about their portfolios—each stock or bond in the fund, the number of shares, and their value—to shareholders twice a year. Critics say such infrequent disclosure may open the door to various efforts to manipulate portfolios and mislead investors.

The AFL-CIO, the Consumer Federation of America, and other groups recently petitioned the SEC to make mutual funds disclose the contents of their portfolios to shareholders at least once a month.

Richards said all the funds under scrutiny saw at least a 3-percent increase in net asset value the last day of the quarters. In some cases, values jumped more than 4 percent or 5 percent, she said. Those figures declined the first day of the following quarter, she said. *Bloomberg*

A new media empire is born

WASHINGTON—The world's biggest media entertainment group opened its first day of business Friday as America Online and Time Warner sealed their merger after the last regulatory hurdle was cleared.

The Federal Communications Commission gave the green light—with some conditions—late Thursday to the AOL Time Warner deal worth $155 billion at the time it was negotiated and $127 billion based on current stock prices.

The US Federal Trade Commission and the European Union also approved the deal.

"AOL Time Warner now becomes the premier global company delivering the world's most highly respected and valuable entertainment, news and Internet brands across rapidly converging media platforms," the new company announced.

On the first day of trading, company shares slipped 76 cents to $46.47.

The merger comes as the Internet industry is experiencing a brutal slump following the euphoria of the past two years.

But Gerald Levin, chief executive of the new firm, said he was confident AOL Time Warner would weather the storm, in part because it was not as dependent as some firms on advertising.

Under conditions announced by FCC chair William Kennard, AOL Time Warner may not restrict competing Internet service providers from its networks.

The FCC said AOL Time Warner must implement a standard that does not block competitors from providing instant-messaging services. *AFP*

'It' could be really huge, but what is it?

SAN FRANCISCO—Everybody wants to know what "it" is.

For the past four days, US media has been speculating about a mysterious invention that has Apple chief executive Steve Jobs, Amazon.com's Jeff Bezos and other luminaries saying it will revolutionize the modern world.

"It" first surfaced on Jan. 9 on Inside.com, a media industry website that reported that the prestigious Harvard Business School Press paid $250,000 to author Steve Kemper for a book detailing the mysterious invention by Dean Kamen, a renowned inventor.

According to Inside.com, Kemper's book proposal claimed Kamen's invention would fundamentally "change the world" and earn the inventor more money in its first year than any company startup in history.

The proposal claims the invention will force the reconfiguration of cities and will have a wider impact than the last big technological innovation, the Internet.

Calls to the offices of Jobs, Bezos, and John Doerr, the venture capitalist said to be backing the invention, were not returned Friday.

Speculation has been ongoing on various Internet chat rooms. Guesses have ranged from a scooter that rides on a cushion of magnetic waves, to a small personal jet pack.

The background of the author and inventor is giving some credence to these boasts.

Kemper has written for The Smithsonian and National Geographic. Kamen, who resides in New Hampshire, is a renowned inventor who created a portable dialysis machine and a motorized wheelchair that climbs and descends stairs. *AFP*

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BANKING GROUP LIMITED
3rd Flr. Tower One Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
As of December 19, 2000

ASSETS		Amount
Cash and Cash Items	P	3,504,978.53
Due from Central Bank		2,593,100,470.54
Due from Other Banks		2,295,891,190.62
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		911,105,607.38
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)		3,177,637,642.99
Equity Investments (Net)		2,579,850.00
Due from Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad		1,878,377,732.04
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures & Equipments (Net)		10,514,022.13
Other Assets (Net)		183,041,716.85
TOTAL ASSETS	P	11,055,753,211.08
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	177,344,139.58
Savings Deposits		1,110,813,429.97
Time Deposits		2,315,611,723.53
Special/Other Deposits		5,923,610.11
Due to Central Bank		11,165,295.84
Due to Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad		6,917,906,646.60
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		7,601,399.81
Bills Payable Interbank Borrowings		110,000,000.00
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		694,047.33
Other Liabilities		148,292,777.31
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	10,805,413,070.08
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		Amount
Assigned Capital	P	250,340,141.00
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	250,340,141.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	11,055,753,211.08
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	1,484,987,917.45
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		1,256,632,852.21
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		1,274,026,433.41
Other Contingent Accounts		1,192,357,498.75
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	5,208,004,701.82

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
HEAD OFFICE
As At 30 September 2000
In AUD Millions

Capital	5,402
Surplus	4,405
Profits	3,607
Total Deposits	100,602
Total Resources	172,467

LIST OF SENIOR OFFICERS:

Mr. Michael La Brooy	General Manager
Mr. Ashish Sharma	Deputy Gen. Manager
Mr. Andrew Holdstock	Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Regina Fajardo	Vice President - Treasury
Mr. Johnny Co	Vice President - Business Banking
Mr. Nonilo Cruz	Vice President - Business Banking
Mrs. Bee Lian So	Vice President - International Services

Other Information

1. Deposits of
   a. Government — nil
   b. Banks — nil
   c. Trust Department — nil
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:
   Prescribed Ratio — 6% Small Ent. — 2% Medium Ent.
   Actual Compliance — 100% — 430%
3. Amount of Non-Performing Loans — 173,161,020.35
4. Ratio of Non-Performing loans to total loan portfolio — 5.74%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets — 184,311,000.00
6. General Provision for Loan Losses — 44,174,124.00
7. Specific Provision for Loan Losses — 87,139,000.00
8. Return on Equity (ROE) - Based on Assigned Capital — 50.81%
   Return on Equity (ROE) - Based on Shareholder's Equity — 22.12%
   Return on Equity (ROE) - Inclusive of Net Due to HO — 10.11%
9. Amount of DOSRI loans/advances — 2,324,856.58
10. Ratio of DOSRI loans/adv to total loans/advances — 0.07%
11. Amount of Past Due DOSRI loans/advances — nil
12. Ratio of Past Due DOSRI loans/adv to total loan portfolio — nil
13. "Net Due to Head Office/Branches/Agencies Abroad" forms part of capital of Philippine Branch of foreign bank — 5,039,528,914.56

*Amended to conform with Circular No. 208 dated August 17, 1999 and Memorandum to All Banks dated November 29, 1999.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

WE, ANDREW HOLDSTOCK and ARLINO MAGSAKAY of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

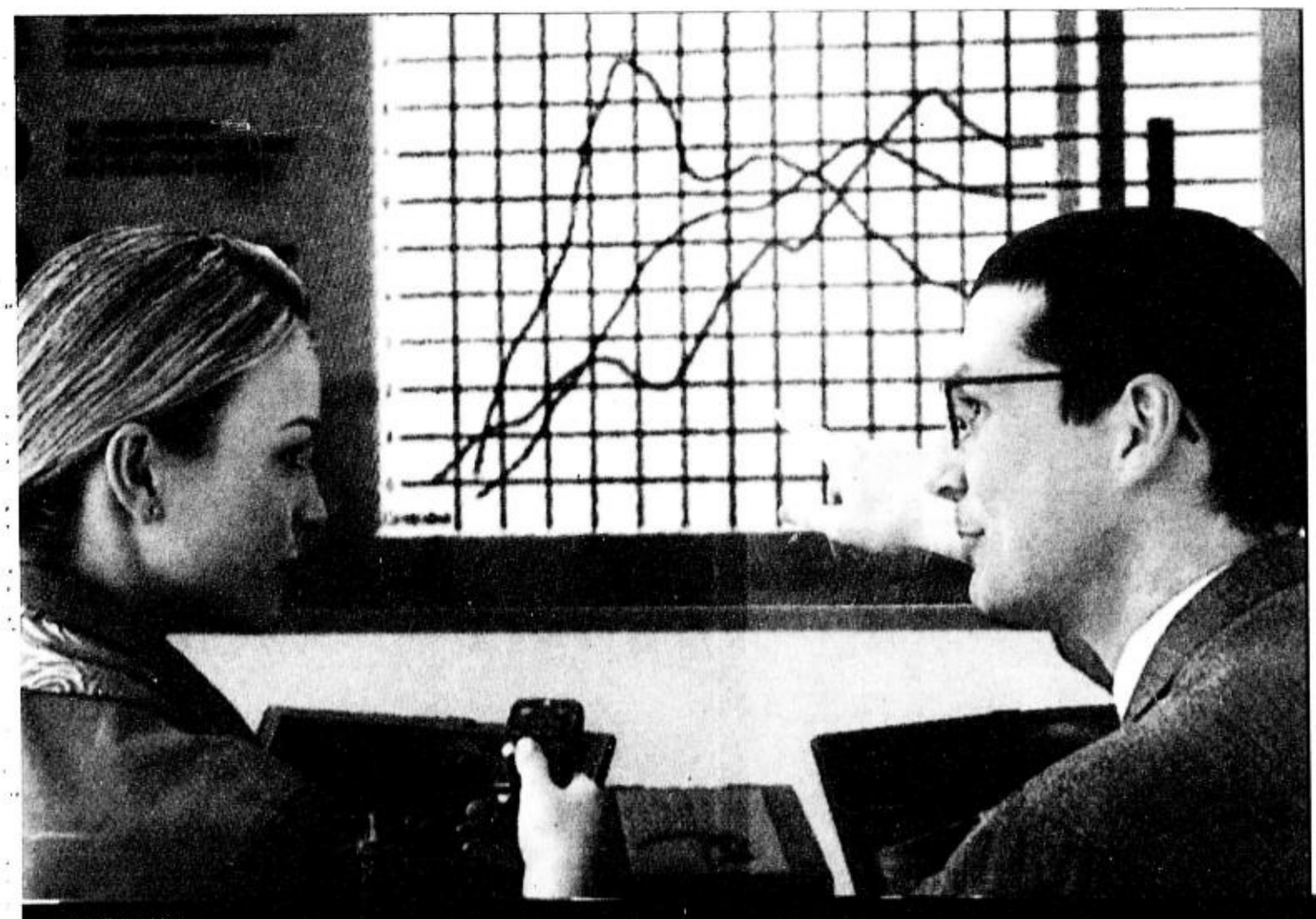
(Original Signed)
ANDREW HOLDSTOCK
Chief Operating Officer

(Original Signed)
ARLINO MAGSAKAY
Assistant Vice-President
Operations

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this _____, affiants exhibiting to me their Passport No. 500153360, issued at U.K., on Nov 16, 1995 and Community Tax Certificate No. 07132073, issued at Manila, on January 17, 2000.

NOTARY PUBLIC
Until Dec. 31, 19 __
PTR No. _____
Date Issued _____

Doc. No. _____
Book No. _____
Page No. _____
Series of 19 _____



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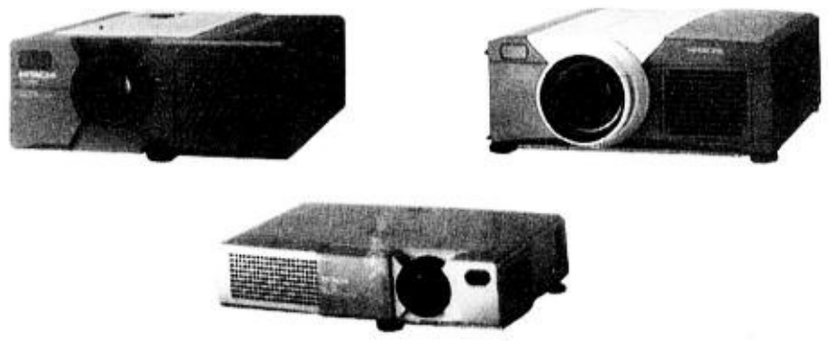

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Prov'l All Around Maids Driver H'Boy w/NBI 8712372 • 8712372

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•CHEAP LBAHAY 9260424•

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LBAHAY 7113540

L-BAHAY 712-16-92

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LIPAT AGAD 5220956

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Carpet/Sofa Clean 8207068

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Ayala Greenfields P10T/m² 372-0888 / 372-0825

LAS PINAS

P952T Cash/Term 8054686

MANILA

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MARIKINA

1000m² P6M 426-0013 Liz

PARANAQUE

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QC: TMORATO 1400 & 2700
QC: VISAYAS AVE 4000 @15T
QC: WEST AVE 700 & 1170
QC: TIMOG 1,380 FOR LEASE
BUL: BLGTAS 2HAS @6T/SQM
BUL: BLGTAS 3600 @15T/SQM
BUL: MEYCA 1HA @4.5T/SQM
BUL: PLRDEL 3HAS @3T/SQM
BUL: GGINTO 11HAS @1T/SQM
BUL: BLWAG 2HAS @1.8T/SQM
BAT: LIPA 1HA @1T/SQM

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AYLAFERN BNEW RFO 13M
LVISTA 1200 4BRPOOL 18.5M
LVISTA 2300 7BR7TB 38M
WPLAINS 360 3BR NICE 9M
GHILLS W 800 5BR5TB 35M
GHILLS W 800 5BR POOL 45M
GHILLS N 890 6BR POOL 53M
GHILLS E 1400 5BRPOOL 63M

RESIDENTIAL LOTS

AYLAHTS 580 @21T 630 @20T
AYALA 1100 @19T 1300 @18T
LAVISTA 1360 @8T W/ VIEW
LAVISTA 1500 @9T 1900 @10T
LAVISTA 1200-4300 @14T
GHILLS E 2125 6BRPOOL GDN
GHILLS EAST 1300 @45T
GHILLS N 750 @45T SOUTH
ROBINSONS CIRCLE 450SQM
CEBU NR WTERFRNT 700SQM
DAVAO INSULAR 700SQM

INDUSTRIAL

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BUL: MRLAO 5HAS 1 WRHSES
CAVTE: FCIE 6000 SALE/LEASE
LAG: CLaMBA 8.9HAS 2T/SQM
LAG: SILANGAN 1.7HAS LEASE
LAG: CLUBANG 2.1HAS LEASE
LAG: CBUYAO LISP SEV LEASE
MLA: VITAS INDL 2HAS LEASE
MLA: STA ANA 2HAS+WRHSE
QC: LIBIS 6000SQM LEASE
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RP DUTERTE
9120943/0917-49543?

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Coml Ortigas Ave Ext 492m² P15Mneg 4110381

418sqm Front College Pasig nr Church 6414589

LOT

MANILA

Nr. UST 325 sqm 7403162

QUEZON CITY

180 SQM GOWILL HOMES 740-31-62

Nr Batasan 581m² P4T/m² 3720869;4542770;3720888

PTuason Cubao Vacant Lot 1300m² bes Daily Mkt; IHA QC P5500/m² Call 932-3892

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Roxas City 189m² 533-0602

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MANILA

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MANDALUYONG

• Cityland Pioneer Mand • 1br Terms DBO 713-9429

Pioneer Hland 1BR 2.8M 15T 09177914366;4121825

P2.5M & Up 2-3 BR New 532-0823 / 534-0880

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715m² Luna Mencias nr. Araullo P29T/m² 4157979

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Ortigas Ctr 2-3BR Sale/Rent 09177914366, 4121825

QUEZON CITY

CubaoCondoP1.3M
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Rent/Sale Mariposa Town House 3br 3tb 724-8729

VL nr SM Fairview P4,500 /M² RUSH 700m² 4157979

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PASIG

Unit 4 Rent Bo. Kapitolyo Pasig 631-4483

RIZAL

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SAN JUAN

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MAKATI

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MANILA

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CONDO/TWNHSE

MANILA

NrlaSalle 3sty3BR T899-2148

MANDALUYONG

MAND CITY EXOTIVE MANTION 4BR 2TB W/ DEN BABY 531-8261

PARANAQUE

Moonwalk Townhouse Newly Renov 5BR 3TB Tel Grge Attic Brokers Welcome 8928014/09178437668

PASAY

FF 2BR 2TB 2Tels Mds Rm •Sunset View Roxas Blvd.• nr DFA Brokers Welcome T8928014/09178437668

QUEZON CITY

2sty Thse 2BR2TB West Riverside St. SFDM CALL 3725701/8962546 P10T

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'97 Grace 268T 731-3492

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97 Besta2.2 200T 3739938

MAZDA

96 MAZDA 323 A1 9318609

MERCEDES

MB100 A-1 0919-5745752

MITSUBISHI

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94 Lancer EL 175T 3739938

95 LANCER GLXI Fld 235T 0917-4242272 / 660-0866

96 Mitsubishi Pajero Green •874-1301 873-9956•

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Bnew L300 8254058 8261045

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HIACE L300 URVAN 8257135

L300 T 4161105 / 7411356

L300 Versa Van 578-8917

STAREX L3 9121809/7268388

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Starex, L300, Coaster Bus Cars 637-7396 631-3496

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Ofc Staff 9134470 Bong

FEMALE

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SECRETARY w/ Accounting Background Bring Bio-data 8101 Pearl Drive Ortigas Cntr Pasig City

MAIDS Direct Hire 7284971

Office Staff 913-4470 Maan

WANTED
EXPD. HAIRDRESSER & MANICURIST T7250882/ 4155507 look for CATHY

1 Plantsadora w/ NBI clear. 4363434 / 9328970 Myra

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Ofc Staff 9134470 Mavel

•Ofc Staff 9134470 Hazz

Off Staff 9134470 Mr. Co

OFFICE STAFF PLS. CALL 7366660 LOOK FOR MS. RHEA

Sales Rep. 10K 723-2737

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Interested applicants may apply at:

HR DEPARTMENT
5626 Ampere St., Palanan, Makati City
Tel. Nos. 831-6433/804-0676/551-8881 to 82
Look for Ms. Rizza Petalver
E-mail address: armvet@info.com.ph

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Transportation and Communications
LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING AND REGULATORY BOARD
East Avenue, Quezon City

Application for a Certification of Public Convenience to operate a TH freight-truck service.

JESUSITO Y. CORTEZ/ANJES TRADING
Applicant/s
CASE NO. 2000-7028

NOTICE OF HEARING

Applicant requests authority to operate a TH freight-truck service within Pasig City and from said place to any point in the island of Luzon accessible to motor vehicle traffic and vice versa, with the use of Six (6) units, with Six (6) ready units.

NOTICE is hereby given that this application will be heard by this Board on January 18, 2001 at 1:00 p.m. at its Office at the above address.

At least five (5) days prior to the above date, applicant/s shall publish this Notice once in one (1) daily newspaper of general circulation in Luzon.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written oppositions supported by documentary evidence on or before the above date furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant/s and may if so, desire appear on said date and time.

This application will be acted upon by this Board on the basis of its records and the documentary evidence submitted by the parties, unless the Board deems it necessary to receive additional documentary and/or evidence.

WITNESS the Honorable DANTE M. LANTIN, Chairman, this 14th day of December 2000.

(Sgd.) GONZALO S. GO, JR.
Chief Legal Division

(PDI – Jan. 15, 2001)

Republika ng Pilipinas
PANGASIWAAN NG TUBIG AT ALKANTARILYA SA METRO MANILA
Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1105, Philippines

MANILA SECOND SEWERAGE PROJECT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
(for Shortlisting of Consultants)

1. The METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM (MWSS) has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) referred to as the World Bank towards the cost of the Manila Second Sewerage Project (MSSP) and intends to apply portion of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for services of Consultants.
2. The MWSS hereinafter referred to as the Employer, intends to shortlist Consultants for the following contracts:
   - MSSP 4 - Construction Supervision for the Rehabilitation of the Manila Central Sewerage System
   - MSSP 9 - Preliminary Design, Detailed Design and Construction Supervision for Sewerage System in Depressed areas
   - MSSP 10 - Detailed Design and Construction Supervision for Sewer Extension in the Central Sewerage System

   The MWSS thru its West Zone concessionaire, MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC. (MWSI) invites eligible Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). In addition, the Consultants shall submit a notarized/sworn statement stating thereof the consultancy cost per project basis, for all completed and on-going contracts undertaken by the firm. Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.
3. This invitation is for the purpose of drawing up a long list of Consultants that claim expertise in Preliminary Design, Detailed Design and Construction Supervision and which shall be the basis of determining the shortlist of Consultants that will be invited to submit detailed proposals.
4. Shortlisting of Consultants shall be done in accordance with National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Guidelines on the Procurement of Consultancy Services for Government Projects.
5. All affiliated companies of MWSI are disqualified to participate. Affiliated companies are those which the concessionaires exercise control of voting stocks or which operate with them as part of a system or enterprise. They shall include, but not limited to those corporation which are subsidiaries owned or controlled by the concessionaire or corporations in which the concessionaires have substantial interest.
6. Interested Consultants may obtain further information and secure the standard format of the sworn statement at the address below from 8.00 AM to 5.00 PM during week day:
   RIZALDY G. DE GUZMAN
   Asst. Program Manager Sewerage
   MWSI-Capital Investment Program Management Division
   MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
   Tel. Nos. (632) 433-2807 435-4379
   Fax No. (632) 435-2182
   E-mail: zaldy.deguzman@mayniladwater.com.ph
7. Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by February 09, 2001 until 5.00 PM.
   THE ADMINISTRATOR
   Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System
   MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
   Tel. No. (632) 922-3757
   Fax No. (632) 921-2887
9. Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's "Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers" January 1997 (revised September 1997 and January 1999).

(Sgd.) JOSE F. MABANTA
Administrator

(PDI – Jan. 15 & 17, 2001)

INQUIRER RiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Color of judgment

Q. Why do judges wear black robes?

A. Modern judicial attire originated in Britain and judges' robes were very colorful until the death in 1694 of Queen Mary II, who ruled jointly with husband William III. At that time, they were changed to black as a sign of mourning and ther color simply stuck.

For the Record. Among the Japanese, white is an appropriate color for mourning, and Japanese brides wear it to show that with their marriage they are "dead to their parents." In China, mourners also wear white because it represents prosperity and happiness in the next world.

Out of Order? A U.S.-based study once compared the economies and numbers of lawyers in 52 nations. Its findings? The higher the percentage of lawyers in a nation's labor force, the lower that country's economic growth rate. It pointed out that economic tigers like Japan, Taiwan and South Korea have low numbers of lawyers, while nations like the United States, England, and Canada have low rates of economic growth and high percentages of lawyers. The study, published in the reputable journal *World Development*, suggested that nations might have a faster economic growth if they reduced the percentage of lawyers and encouraged more young people to enter "more productive fields."

WORD WATCH

Husgado : from the Spanish juzgado, "court of law; courtroom."

(PDI – Jan. 15, 2001)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY

7TH FLOOR LEGASPI TOWERS 200, PASEO DE ROXAS,
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INVITATION TO LEASE LAND

The Public Estates Authority, a government-owned corporation is leasing out through public bidding several vacant lots located in the Central Business Park I Island A, Roxas Boulevard Reclamation Area in Pasay City, with the following approximate areas and prescribed business use:

	Business	Area in Square Meters
1.	Car Exchange	3,000
2.	Home Depot	4,000
3.	Golf Range	17,600
4.	Garden Nurseries	2,000

Interested parties may secure the Terms of Reference and other bid documents from the Cashier's Office at 7th Floor, Public Estates Authority, Legaspi Tower 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City from **January 29 - February 2, 2001**, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500.00.

(Sgd.) **JAIME R. MILLAN**
Chairman, Asset Disposition Committee

(PDI - Jan. 15, 20 & 24, 2001)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The BIR invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for all or any of the following:

Lot 1	-	Internet Service (Office Automation)
Lot 2	-	Facilities Management Services
Lot 3	-	Maintenance of Microcomputers and Peripherals
Lot 4	-	Maintenance of Sun Servers
Lot 5	-	Maintenance of Network Facilities
Lot 6	-	Lease Lines

Checklist of requirements for application of eligibility and bid documents are available for issuance to prospective bidders at BAC-IT Secretariat Office, Room 306, RCC Building, BIR-NOB Compound, BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Deadline for submission of requirements is on **January 26, 2001.**

A complete set of bid documents maybe obtained by any interested eligible bidders upon notification and payment of non-refundable fee of P200.00 per set.

The BIR BAC-IT assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any excuse or loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bid and reserves the right to reject any or all bids and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **VICTOR G. BORROMEO**
Assistant Commissioner
Chairman
Bids & Awards Committee for
Information Technology (BAC-IT) Resources

(PDI - Jan. 15, 2001)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
SECOND JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 20
CAUAYAN, ISABELA

Land Reg. Case No. 20-98-01 LRA Record No. N-71549

NOTICE OF INITIAL HEARING

To the Hon. Solicitor General, Office of the Solicitor General, 134 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, the Director, Land Management Bureau, Escolta, Manila; the Regional Executive Director, Region II - DENR Tuguegarao, Cagayan; the Hon. Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways, Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila; the Hon. Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform, P.T.A. Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, the Director, Forest Management Bureau, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, both in Quezon City, Metro Manila; the Provincial Governor, the Provincial Prosecutor, the General Services Officer, the Provincial Engineer, the Public Works and Highways District Engineer, the CENR Officer, CENRO, Land Manager, government Sector, all in Ilagan, Isabela, the Municipal Mayor, the Municipal Council, Cauayan, Isabela; Josefa Argonza, Serapio Uy, both in Poblacion Cauayan, Isabela, Teodora Zara, Ilagan, Isabela. AND TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

An application having been filed in the above entitled case by SEVERINO AGCAOILI, married to Jesusa T. Agcaoili, Centro, Cauayan, Isabela assisted by Atty. Rodrigo A. Rigos, Cauayan, Isabela praying for the registration and confirmation of the title to the following described land.

A parcel of land (Lot 1014-C, of the subdivision plan Csd-(af)-02-000708-D being a portion of lot 1014, Pls-595 Ext. situated in the Barrio of District 3, Municipality of Cauayan, Province of Isabela, Island of Luzon. Bounded on the E., along line 1-2 by Pilar Street; on the S., along line 2-3 by lot 1014-B, of the subd. plan; on the W., along lines 3-4-5 by Rizal Avenue Ext.; and on the NE., & NW., along lines 5-6-7-1 by lot 1014-D, of the subd. plan. Beginning at a point marked "1" on the plan being S. 3 deg. 53'W., 309.70 m. from BLLM No. 1, Pls-595-Ext.

thence	S.	7 deg.	22' E.,	12.88 m.	to point 2;
thence	S.	87 deg.	55' W.,	55.10 m.	to point 3;
thence	N.	8 deg.	07' W.,	1.66 m.	to point 4;
thence	N.	5 deg.	46' E.,	9.25 m.	to point 5;
thence	S.	85 deg.	27' E.,	31.13 m.	to point 6;
thence	N.	7 deg.	23' E.,	2.95 m.	to point 7;
thence	N.	80 deg.	45' E.,	21.58 m.	to pint of

beginning, containing an area of FIVE HUNDRED FORTY FOUR (544) SQUARE METERS, more or less. All points referred to are indicated on the plan and are marked on the ground by all PS, cyl. conc. mons. 15x40 cms. Bearings true, Date of original survey not available and that of the subdivision survey was executed by Geodetic Engineer, Rogelio F. Olivete on May 3, 1998 and was approved on September 9, 1998.

You are hereby served this notice to appear before this court at it session to be held at RTC, Branch 20, Cauayan, Isabela, Philippines on the 30th day of January, 2001 at 8:30 a.m. then and there to present such claim as you may have to said land or any portion thereof, and to submit evidence in support of such claim and unless you appear at said court at the time and place aforesaid, your default will be recorded and the title to the land will be adjudicated and determined in accordance with law and the evidence before the court and thereafter you will forever be barred from contesting said application (or petition) or any decree entered thereon.

Witness: the Hon. HENEDINO P. EDUARTE, Executive Judge of said Court, the 19th day of June, 2000.

Issued at Quezon City, Philippines, this 13th day of October, 2000.

ATTEST:

ALFREDO R. ENRIQUEZ
Administration
Land Registration Authority

By:

(Sgd.) SALVADOR L. ORIEL
Chief, Docket Division

A True Copy:

(Sgd.) ADELAIDA I. CARAIG
Chief, Publication of Notices Section

(PDI - Jan. 15, 2001)

Mini Job Fair AT THE Glorietta

The **INQUIRER**'s **JOB MARKET** will hold a **"mini" Job Fair** on **January 24** to **26, 2001**; 1 to 8 p.m. at Level 3, Glorietta III, Ayala Center, Makati City (near Racks). Be part of this recruitment special and be included in our **Resumé Reserve** categorized database.

PLACE A 60 COL. CM. AD (MINIMUM SIZE) IN THE JANUARY 21, 2001 ISSUE OF JOB MARKET TO ENJOY THE FOLLOWING:

- **FREE Job Market Online** placement for five (5) Job categories
- **FREE Job Market** copies for job seekers on the 3-day affair
- **FREE** access to our **Resumé Reserve** databank gathered during the event
- **FREE** posting and exposure to participating companies in our print ads
- Resumés gathered during the event intended to a particular advertiser will be forwarded as an added service to the said company

COME TO OUR MINI JOB FAIR AND GET THE CHANCE TO:

- Input your resumés directly into Resumé Reserve via our computers
- Get free Job Market copies
- Submit application to a particular company (Bring at least 10 to 20 copies of resumés)

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TARLAC II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the supply and delivery of the following requirements stated below are hereby invited to prequalify or accredit with Tarlac II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Tarelco II). Only prequalified and/or accredited suppliers shall be invited to participate in the bidding, to wit:

	Project Title
Schedule I -	Supply and Delivery of Various Office Supplies
Schedule II -	Supply and Delivery of Various Items for Motorpool Use
Schedule III -	Supply and Delivery of Various Hardwares, Wires, Concrete Poles and Other Materials and Equipments for Expansion and Rehabilitation of Electrical Distribution Line Projects and for Other Purposes

Prequalification on Accreditation documents shall be received from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM by the Prequalifications, Bids and Awards Committee through its Chairman, Mr. JOSE D. TAPNIO, at TARELCO II Main Office Building located at San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac.

Submission of Prequalification / Accreditation Documents **January 19, 2001**

Bidding Documents containing the Detailed List of items to be bidded for Schedule I, II and III can be secured from the PBAC Secretariat also on **January 19, 2001** upon payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00. Sealed bids shall be received by the PBAC Secretariat not later than **January 26, 2001** at the close of office hours (5:00 P.M.).

Accredited suppliers previously prequalified/accredited need only to update their files with Tarelco II.

Tarelco II reserves the right to reject any and all applications to prequalify/accreditation and to bid without offering any reason, and waive any defect therein. Tarelco II reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Additional information can be furnished upon request. Send all communications to the PBAC Secretariat at the address mentioned above or at Telephone No. (045) 9230 499 or Fax No. (045) 9230 471.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. ROMEO C. MACALINO**
General Manager

(PDI--January 15, 2001)

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Dr. Hernando Hilario Y Alejandro

of

Bustos, Bulacan
(Husband of the late Concepcion Lipana Hilario)

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 13, 2001 at 11:00 p.m. in Bustos, Bulacan at the age of 91.

His bereaved children **Isabelita** and **Joseph Chen**, **Rufina** and **Richard Robinson**, **Lourdes**, **Michael** and **Edelene Hilario**; grandchildren **Cecille** and **David Chen**, **Mark**, **April** and **BJ Hilario**; and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. On Thursday, January 18, 2001, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass, his body will be brought home to their residence in Bustos, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 20, 2001 at the Bustos Memorial Park, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Sto. Niño Parish Church, Bustos, Bulacan.

Josefina "Pining" Bersonda - Gallardo

of Sta. Isabel, Malolos and Marilao, Bulacan

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 13, 2001 at the age of 80.

Loving wife of **Rosendo Gallardo Sr.** (✝); doting mother of **Rene** and **Olive**, **Tito** and **Nena**, **Cecille** and **Robert**, **Ricky** and **Vacion**, **Roland** and **Susan**, **Junior** and **Sol**, **Ramon** and **Evelyn**, **Luchie** and **Boy**, **Obet**, **Lilibeth** and **Charlie**, **Edward** and **Cecille**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their family residence at #20 R. Angeles Street, Saog II, Marilao, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Tuesday, January 16, 2001 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Marilao Memorial Park, Lias Road, Marilao, Bulacan.

SEGUNDO N. JAVIER

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 13, 2001 at the age of 83.

His bereaved wife **Lutgarda Lim**; children **Malou**, **Joey** and **Anne**; grandchildren **Marc**, **Joseph** and **Christopher**; sister **Nena**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Chapel Q, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 20, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

ERRATUM

In the Obituary Ad of the late **Benjamin Castillo Gutierrez**, published in this paper yesterday, January 14, 2001.

The last sentence should have read **Cremation at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque shall follow the 9:00 a.m. Mass on January 16, 2001**

Our apologies.

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2 Cor. 4:14

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1305 G. Araneta Avenue Quezon City Tel. 732-0309 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad Mandaue City Cebu
Tels 346-2543 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City Tels. 231-0721, 231-3192

COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
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People, Events & Products

REZ GOPEZ-SINDAC, Editor

GENTXT opening salvo for 2001

GLOBE Handyphone GENTXT ushers in the beginning of the new millennium with a spirited gig via the GENTXT Crossover Live Party happening on Jan. 18, 9 p.m. at Chef and Brewer in Ortigas.

On Jan. 29, GENTXTers have a date at the movies with the advance screening of the hit comedy "What Women Want" featuring Academy Award winners Mel Gibson and Helen Hunt. The first 45 GENTXTers to go to Harrison Communications get a pair of tickets on this special night at SM Megamall.

Harrison Communications is located at the fourth floor of First Life Center Bldg., 174 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Look for GENTXTer Cecille, flash your GENTXT card and you're on you're way to the first GENTXT treats for 2001.

The GENTXT Crossover Live Party and the special advance screening of "What Women Want" are just two of the many exclusive offerings GENTXT extends to its cardholders. Apart form gimmicks and parties, GENTXTers are also in for big discounts at various establishments once they present their GENTXT cards. To date, GENTXT has more than 80 partner establishments from restaurants to specialty stores, giving more fun and privileges the GENTXT way.

To avail of these perks, interested Globe Handyphone subscribers should simply drop by any Globe Telecom Business Centers or at the GENTXT booth in Glorietta and present the necessary requirements to qualify them to the hottest gimmicks in town.

Further information on GENTXT may be accessed through its website at www.gentxt.org or through Infotext by keying in GENTXT and sending it to 2333.

LIGHT UP A LIFE PROJECT

Manila vice mayor Danny Lacuna (third from right) poses with Philips and Holiday Inn Manila executives during the launch of the Light Up a Life project, a fund-raising activity for the benefit of Senden Homes, a non-profit and non-governmental organization which houses homeless boys aged 4 to 12. With Mayor Lacuna are (from left) Holiday Inn Manila general manager Rutger Verschuren, Philips president and CEO Pratt Hsu, Philips Lighting vice president Mario Hernandez and Holiday Inn executive assistant manager Bernardo Corpuz.

DOT-DDB PARTNERSHIP

The Department of Tourism partners with advertising firm DDB Philippines in undertaking a new promotional campaign to strengthen the Rediscovery Philippines program of the government. Sealing the partnership with a handshake and exchange of contracts are Tourism secretary Gemma Cruz-Araneta and DDB Phils. president Gil Chua.

Salalima re-elected Petef president

THE PHILIPPINE Electronics and Telecommunications Federation (PETEF), the nationwide federation encompassing the country's telecommunications, information technology, electronics and broadcasting industries, recently held its election of officers and board of directors for the year 2001.

Re-elected as president of PETEF is lawyer Rodolfo A. Salalima, senior vice president for corporate and regulatory affairs of Globe Telecom. Salalima's re-election marks his second term as PETEF president.

Also elected to the PETEF year 2001 board of directors and officers are: Romeo T. Recto of PETEF Foundation Inc. as director and VP for finance and treasurer; Maureen V. Santiago of Phil. Chamber of Communications as director and VP for events; Albert L. Tuason of Telecommunications Operators of the Phils. as director and VP for government relations; David T. Fernando of Nextstage as director and VP for membership; Romulo R. Agatep of IECEP as director and VP for education; Roland Marcos S. Padilla of ITESAP as director and VP for communication and Olegario S. Serafica of Maschinen and Technik Inc. as director and auditor.

SALALIMA

Other members of the board of directors are Ma. Corazon Akol of PADEC, Albert S. Velasco of PISO, Cynthia R. Mamon of SunMicrosystems, Francisco Jesus Naranjilla of Nokia, Rogelio V. Quevedo of Smart, Julius M. Labrador of EIAPI and Miguel F. Uy of ITAP.

Assisting this year's board are Melchor S. Latina of Islacom as secretary general, Jose E. Escaner Jr. of PETEF as executive director-secretariat and Oscar S. Villacorta of PETEF as executive director-training.

The PETEF officers will take their oath of office on Jan. 25, 2001 at the Manila Polo Club.

RP hosts Internet commerce confab

THE PHILIPPINES will host the 1st Philippine International Business Forum and Technology Exhibition on Internet Commerce or E-Commerce Expo 2001 which will be held on Feb. 22-25 at the SM Megamall, Edsa, Mandaluyong City.

Expected participants are technology and equipment vendors, Internet service providers, telecommunications companies, IT security systems companies, existing start-up dot.coms, Filipino companies, e-logistics companies, Internet banking companies, virtual e-tailers and shopping malls, online financial institutions, cellphone companies promoting WAP technology, e-commerce solutions providers/consultancy firms, systems integrators, webpage designers/webmasters, government agencies offering online services, educational institutions offering online learning and publishing companies.

For details, call 897-9494, 0917-929-3732 or e-mail: expo.com@egis.net.

RUSTAN'S CYBER PLACE

Rustan's Superstore in Cubao recently inaugurated its newest wing called Cyber Place. This latest attraction features various fun and amusement stalls offering internet access and gaming, hobby items and 4 WD racing, telecom units and accessories, video games among others. Leading the ribbon cutting ceremony are (from left) Carolyn Ngo of Lil's Hobby Shop, J.P. Tantoco of the Rustan's Group of Companies, and Ferdie Guilles of Globe Telecoms.

Pasig street now Escriva Drive

VICE MAYOR Lorna Angeles Bernardo of Pasig City recently led a ceremony renaming Amber Drive to Blessed Josemaria Escriva Drive.

Josemaria Escrive, the founder of Opus Dei, inspired the establishment of the University of Asia and the Pacific and the Sancta Maria Stella Orientis Oratory located on this street.

"The fact that devotees of Blessed Josemaria Escriva from all over the Philippines come to attend services at Stella Orientis Oratory adds honor and prestige to our beloved city of Pasig," said Mayor Bernardo. She thanked the University of Asia and the Pacific for being a partner in the economic boom and progress of Pasig City in recent years.

The University of Asia and the Pacific, formerly the Center for Research and Communications, is a project of the first members of Opus Dei in the Philippines.

"Blessed Josemaria provided us with a rich inspiration that we at the University strive to live by," said University president Dr. Jose Ma. Mariano.

The University commits itself to people development, values formation, and socially relevant research and communication in its institutional programs and activities. It has a current student population of 2,000. Aside from the College of Arts and Sciences, it has three graduate schools: Economics, Education and Management; and four graduate institutes: Communication, Information Technology Studies, Nursing Development and Political Economy.

PHILIPPINE CULTURAL NIGHT IN VIENNA

Philippine Ambassador to Austria Victor G. Garcia III and his wife, Connie (second from left and second from right, respectively) recently hosted members of Vienna's diplomatic and economic circle to a cultural presentation of Philippine songs and folk dances at the Natural History Museum, one of Vienna's historical landmarks. With them are Nicaraguan chargé d' affaires Alberto José Altamirano-Lacayo; Spanish ambassador Raimundo Perez-Hernandez; Algerian ambassador Mokhtar Reguieg, Algerian minister of oil Chacib Chelil, Madam Chelil and Madam Reguieg.

GRADUATES OF KELLOG

Students and some alumni of the Kellog Graduate School of the Kellog Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University, conducted an interview of college graduates who are planning to apply at Kellog. From left: Jonby Syjucom-MBA '02, J-Anne Rivera-'00, Sheila Dumlao-'01, Susanne van Laarhoven-'01, SGV chair Cesar Purisima-'83, Sandra Ramos-'02, Bunny Fabella-'86 and Cezar Yatco-'55. Not in photo is alumni president Dennis Valdes, '90.

Grovery launches new product

GROVERY Corporation introduces its newest universal Motor Oil which can be used for gasoline and diesel engines with the highest American Petroleum Institute rating, SJ/CH-4 which has a multi-grade viscosity.

The Polo turbo XT Premium Motor Oil, a superior engine protection with highly refined base oil and especially selected additives will extend your engine's life to reduce the co-efficient of friction. The PoloSuper XLD Superior Premium Engine oil, with TBN/reserve, developed for diesel engines that operate on high sulfur fuels. It has high alkaline reserve that guard against acid formation to protect crankcase. Originally manufactured in PICO Rivera Los Angeles, California, USA. For more information, call 722-4910.

CO-BRANDING AGREEMENT

Equitable CardNetwork Inc. (ECN) recently entered into a co-branding agreement with DevCap Asia Card Services Inc. to come up with Pinoykard, a Visa credit card that aims to serve the nation's military and police communities. Present at the signing are (from left) Nelia Carlos, ECN senior vice president and treasurer; Eugenio Hernando, ECN senior executive vice president; Meliton Salazar Jr., DevCap president; and Peter Perfecto, DevCap Asia COO.

The Heritage Hotel Manila has new GM

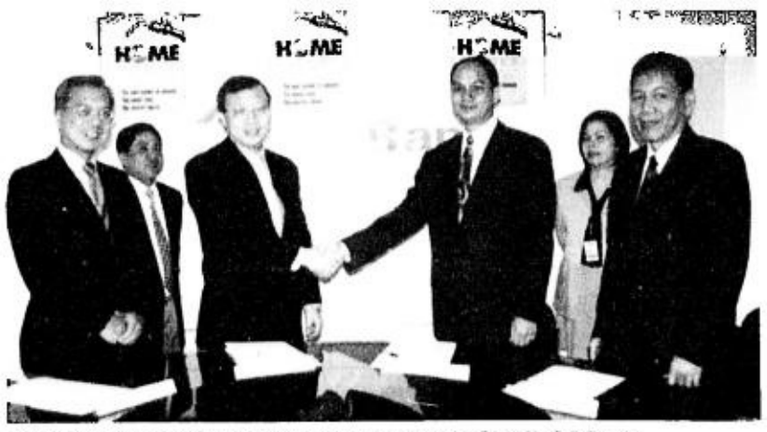
KONG

JOSEPH Kong has been named as the new general manager of The Heritage Hotel Manila. This was announced by the hotel's corporate office in Singapore, the Millennium & Copthorne International Limited. Kong's experience in the hospitality industry spans three decades. Prior to his appointment, he was the general manager of the 440-room Copthorne Orchid Hotel Singapore.

He has also been connected with the group's other properties in the Lion City like Harbour View Dai-ichi Hotel and The Boulevard. In between the above positions, he had also engaged in marketing and developing projects for the Singapore-based Hong Leong Group of Hotels in Penang, Taipei and China. He was also the driving force behind the 405-room Millennium Sirih, Jakarta at the height of the political and economic crisis, thus adding to his sterling track record in hotel management. He was also connected with the Singapore Tourism Promotion Board and the World Express Pte. Ltd. Kong graduated from the University of New South Wales in Australia with a degree in commerce. He earned his Masters at the University of Sydney.

NEW COLORS AT SM

Susan Rueda (center) is the second winner of a Toyota Echo at the Shop and Win New Colors raffle promotion at the SM Department Store. The third winner of the raffle promo is Carmelita Aida Dula. Handing the symbolic key is Shoemart senior assistant vice president for merchandising, planning and control Aida Dela Cruz (right) and Shoemart ad and promo account manager Kilet Cheng.



KEPPEL BANK PARTNERS WITH HOME CABLE

Keppel Bank now accepts Home Cable bill payments over the counter with a same day payment credit feature. This is one of the convenient banking services offered by Keppel Bank through its on-line IT system. Sealing the agreement are (from left) Keppel Bank SVP for retail banking Roberto Borromeo, FVP for ITD Wilfredo Bautista, president Hoe Eng Hock, Home Cable SVP and chief finance officer Francis Hernando, manager for credit and collection Nica Sumera, and VP and assistant treasurer Fernan Flores.

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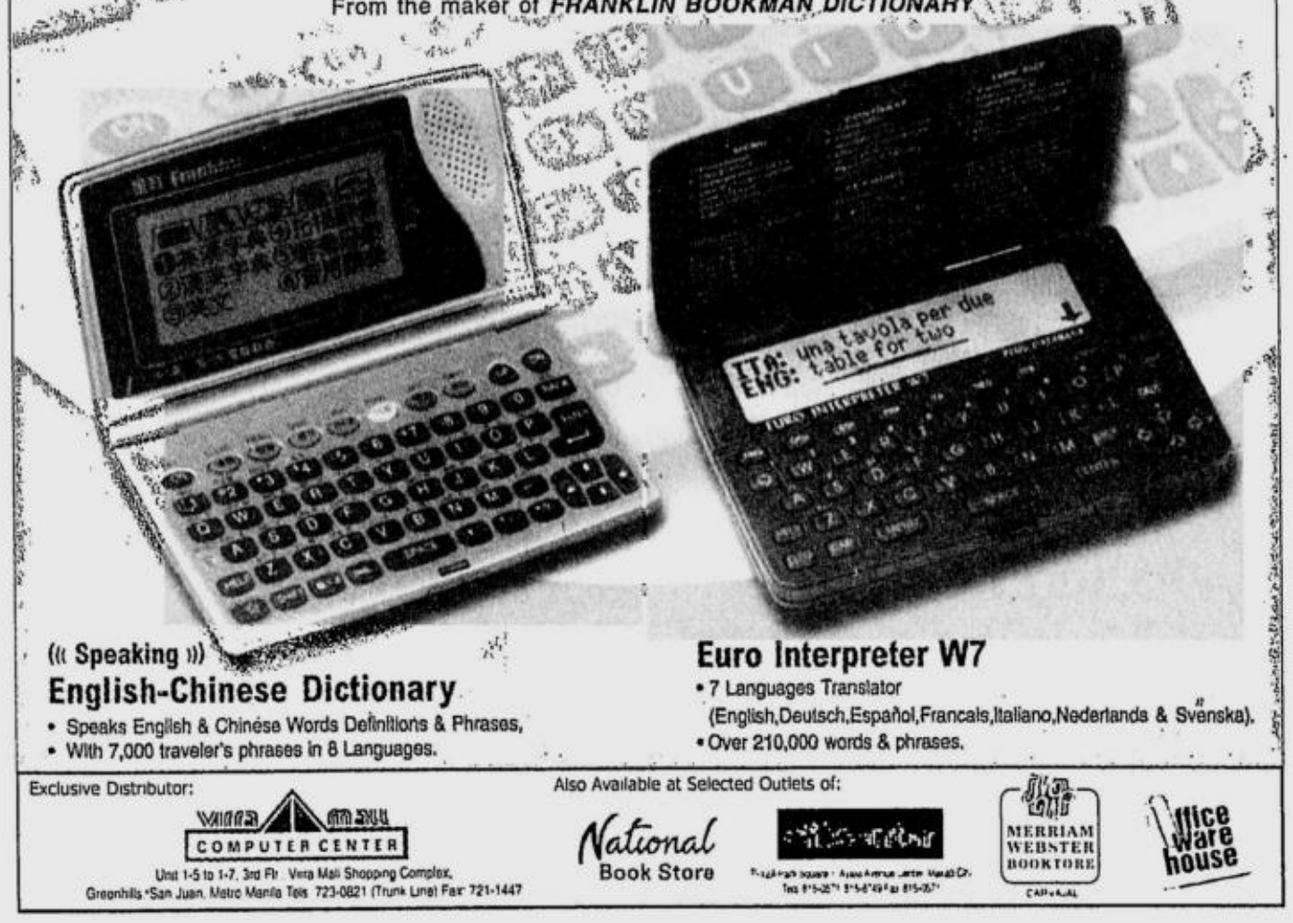

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Bangko Sentral sees lower interest rates

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said it would bring down interest rates by another half-a-percentage point within the next four weeks then maintain overnight borrowing at 12 percent and overnight lending at 14.25 percent for a good part of the year 2001.

"There is still room for another 50-point cut in the next four weeks but not necessarily (next) week," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said last Friday.

Effective today, overnight borrowing and lending rates are down half-a-percentage point to 12.5 percent and 14.75 percent, respectively.

He said expectations of further reductions in US interest rates helped bolster the resolve of the policy-making Monetary Board to accommodate further cuts in key local rates.

"We want to bring it down to 12 percent then leave it stable. Our goal is still to bring it down to 11 percent within the year," the BSP chief said.

Buenaventura admitted that the larger-than-expected deficit last year as well as the likelihood that the budget gap would swell to similar levels this year reduced the BSP's flexibility in bringing down interest rates.

A ballooning deficit that is financed through the domestic market would tend to crowd out the private sector and create pressure on local interest rates.

The budget deficit last year is expected to soar to P139 billion from P111.7 billion the previous year. For the year 2001, economic managers expect the budget gap to swell to P130 billion against a target of P85 billion.

"On the other hand, we may see less private sector demand on credit which would not result to the crowding out but this also means lower growth," the central bank governor said.

Another 50-point cut would bring the total reduction in the BSP's rates since early December to three percentage points and only a percentage point away from the pre-"Juetengate" levels.

Buenaventura said signs of an easing inflationary pressure toward the second semester of the year convinced monetary authorities last Thursday to cut rates effective today.

He pointed out that a lower interest rate regime would help the government bring inflation down toward the second half of the year as it would help spur economic growth.

The BSP said the tiering system on banks' overnight placements in the central bank's vaults would continue to apply. The tiering pays a 12.5-percent interest on bank deposits up to P5 billion, 11 percent for the next P5 billion and 9.5 percent for placements in excess of P10 billion.

The cut in the central bank's rates is expected to lead to a further decline in the

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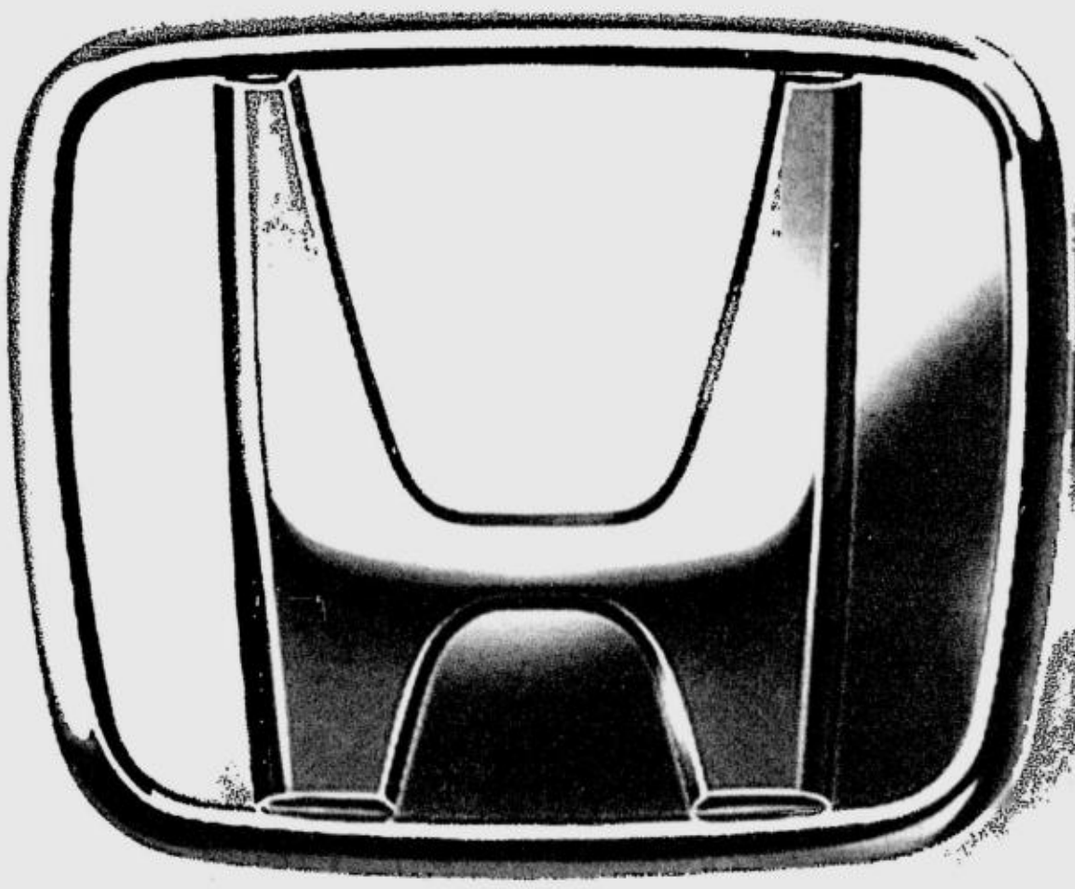

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*Based on CAMPI report for the year 2000

BUSINESSMonday

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

Empty promises of the rich behind RP woes

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

REVERED business leader Washington Sycip, founder of financial services firm SGV & Co., heaped the blame for the country's political and economic problems on the indifference of the country's elite to the plight of the poor masses.

In a speech before members of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines, Sycip said many of the country's problems—from a fragile economy to poor government service to insurgency in the crisis—can be traced to the widening gap between the rich and the poor.

"In all developing nations, you have serious problems of peace and order if you do not reduce the gap between the few percent of the population that is on top and the mass of the population that is at the bottom," Sycip said.

SYCIP

Like Latin American countries, Sycip said the Philippines is also a leader in economic inequality in the region.

Based on one of the statements made by Ateneo de Manila urging President Estrada to resign, Sycip said the upper income groups have forgotten their pledge made during the 1983 crisis and the 1989 coup d'état to close the gap between the rich in the poor.

One of the indications of increasing poverty, he said, is the failure of the Philippines to solve the slum problem. Other countries in Southeast Asia, he said, such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand have no more slums in their capital cities unlike Metro Manila that cannot even solve a garbage problem.

Sycip said he was greatly bothered by the lack of concern by the upper income group on corruption in all sectors of the government. He said government corruption would not be possible if the rich did not provide the bribery funds.

He noted that while government technocrats have performed well in the past 35 years, "our problems have usually been the weakness of elected officials or political appointees who have been unwilling to separate their personal friends, former colleagues, and their families from government decisions."

Instead of buckling down to work in solving pressing community and national problems, Sycip said the upper income groups "try to escape from our difficulties by moving funds abroad."

He said that he is saddened by the fact that he has lived to see the Philippines deteriorate from a country that was leading Asia to a cellar dweller decades later.

He also chided the upper income groups for cheating on their taxes. "A successful Filipino doctor in Philadelphia was here during the holidays and he was shocked at how little income was being declared by his former classmates who were living in luxurious houses and taking frequent vacations abroad. Our collections of estate taxes are shockingly low. For a country with so many NGOs, donations by the rich are miserably low!"

To solve the inequalities in the present tax system, Sycip said the government should tax evidences of wealth, like houses, cars, trips, golf and sports clubs and weddings instead of using self declarations of income.

Other issues that concerned Sycip were the deteriorating state of the country's public schools; absence of a consistent and long-range family planning program; inefficient and inadequate government services that should benefit the poor; and lack of minority representation in the Senate, Cabinet and Supreme Court.

Noting former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's view that "for democracy to succeed, a country must have a fair-size middle class," Sycip said the upper income group should actively move to expand the ranks of the middle-income group to achieve sustainable economic development.

"It is so easy for us to organize demonstrations, to be against dictators, traditional politicians, corruption; but it is so difficult for us to unite and find workable step by step solutions to our problems, and even more difficult to implement the much needed changes in our society," Sycip said.

Sycip also shared Lee Kuan Yew's skepticism on whether de-

EMPTY/ C3

Asia welcomes US rate cut

TOKYO—The interest rate cut in the United States is proving a pleasant New Year's surprise for Asia, raising hopes the region can keep a shaky recovery going by boosting exports to a less frugal America.

But while stock markets here surged on the heels of the Federal Reserve's rate reduction Wednesday, experts expressed caution.

Further cuts are needed for potential lasting benefits to the region, a huge exporter of cars and electronics that's still smarting from a 1998 financial crisis. Layoffs are rampant in South Korea. Japan faces a multitrillion-dollar government debt.

"No one has money in Japan—the nation, the banks, the companies. The only hope for us is for Americans to make money and spend," said Shigeyuki Murata, a 45-year-old book translator. He was checking his investments by gazing at a brokerage firm's electronic display—parading Tokyo share prices on a rare upswing Friday.

Similar sentiments were echoed elsewhere in Asia.

"If the US economy booms, it will help our economy and our construction industry," said Kim Jung-il, a 39-year-old building contractor in South Korea. "We want a good US economy as much as Americans do."

The US Federal Reserve slashed its benchmark interest rate by half a percentage point between its regular meetings—a surprise that sent a global signal the Fed wants to revive the sagging US economy.

Reflecting a trend across the region, the benchmark Nikkei index in Tokyo rose 1.2 percent Friday following a powerful rally on Wall Street. It had slipped the day before, as investors initially expressed caution toward the rate cut. Financial markets were closed Monday in Tokyo for a national holiday.

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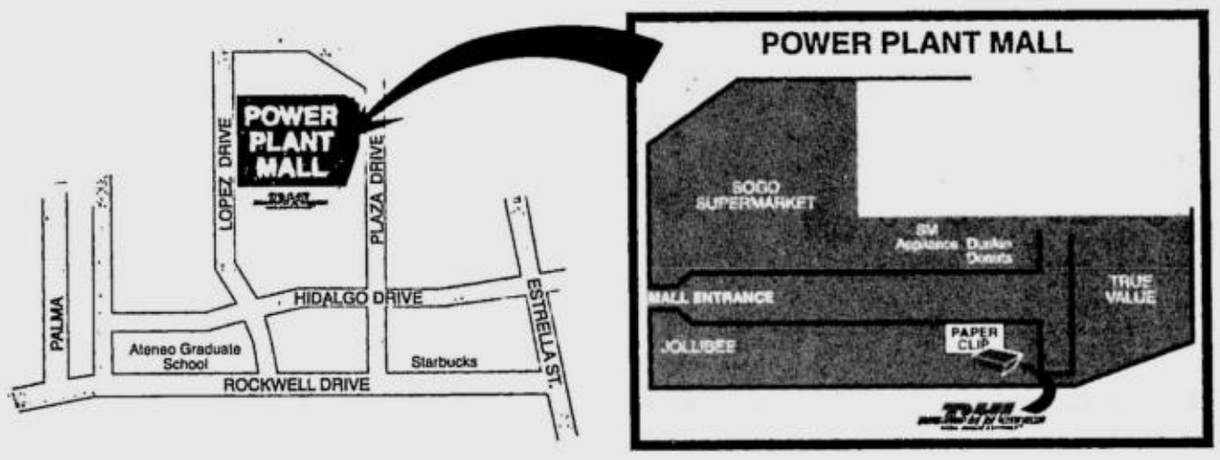

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CEO's role in making a great company or country

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Augusto L. De Leon

THERE now exists many great companies that have cash flows and net worth much greater than many developing countries like the Philippines. Much can be learned from the way the CEOs of these companies transformed small enterprises into great and enduring companies. Maybe the leadership of our country can learn something about management.

Less developed countries, like the Philippines, could attain sustainable growth and prosperity if we had the leaders with attributes of the CEOs that have made great companies in the world. Our first indicator is the inflow of capital to create jobs. But when investors make decisions to invest in a country, they make investment decisions on the leadership of that country first and foremost.

A most recent study made by two professors at Stanford University now published in a book titled "Beyond Entrepreneurship: Turning your Business into an Enduring and Great Company." It provides some interesting insights into the most critical starting point of what makes great companies that endure. It is LEADERSHIP.

The authors start off by saying that there is no single "effective leadership" style. Gandhi was frail and soft spoken; Abraham Lincoln, thoughtful and melancholy; Churchill, a fierce and indomitable bulldog; Thatcher, stern and tenacious; Luther King, impassioned and eloquent. Each one was highly effective.

Cited was a case of a CEO with a very high IQ, a Ph.D., an MBA with solid experience. He worked 80 hours a week but after a short surge of growth, the company he was managing floundered and went on a downward spiral. The analysis of what went wrong is quoted herewith:

"He preached respect for people yet he never trusted people. He chanted teamwork but expected teams to play blind obedience.

"He was terribly indecisive, confronted with an important decision; he would analyze it over and over, delaying action. Opportunities passed by and small problems developed into major crisis.

"He had no clear priorities, everything was top priority.

"He spent most of his time sealed safely away in the office behind thick, closed doors.

"He constantly criticized people and yet never gave any positive reinforcement.

"Never effectively communicated the vision of the company.

"He spoke and wrote in turgid, technical language, which did not inspire people."

The most interesting part was the section on what makes a good and effective leader. Some of the examples are of companies that are familiar to many of us.

First on the list is AUTHENTICITY. "Leadership effectiveness is authentically living the vision of the company (country). The values and ambitions of a company (country) are not instilled entirely by what the leaders say . . . but by what the leaders do.

In healthy companies, there are no inconsistencies between what is said and what the leader actually does. Phil Knight was driven by performance, competition and winning and he touched the "Nike" people because it was real.

The authors say, you have to be a role model of the culture you want to create. They cited Sam Walton of Wal-Mart. Sam preaches that frugality, leanness and efficiency create unbeatable strength.

Walton will, thus, not rent a car more expensive than a subcompact when travelling. He flies via commercial airline economy class, orders potato chips and Coca-Cola for board meetings, gets his coffee from the vending machine just like everyone else, uses his old beat-up car even when hosting English dignitaries.

Conclusion: back your words with action. Live what you say. Don't just talk about it, do it. CEOs who do not back their words with what they do certainly will not build great companies.

Leaders of great companies seldom suffer from indecision. The ability to decide is an essential attribute of well-functioning teams and individuals. But being decisive does not mean being bullheaded. The qualities of leadership must be practiced to have meaning. We hope that our leaders find it in themselves to create a country that is great and enduring.

(This article reflects the personal views of the author who is a member and past governor of Management Association of the Philippines and chair of De Leon Consulting. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globe.com)

Thai exec's airline flies high despite RP economic turmoil

SAKCHAI Srongprapa, general manager of Thai Airways International in the Philippines for the last six years, has been stationed in Manila for so long that the government might just make him a Filipino citizen.

SRONGPRAPA

Not that "Pom," as he is fondly called, minds. "I'm enjoying myself here. It's just like home," says the 43-year-old Bangkok native. As with diplomats, the normal tour of duty for airline executives is about three to four years in a foreign post.

But it's easy to see why Khun Sakchai's superiors in Bangkok would want to keep him in Manila for much longer. While the rest of the airline and tourism industries—indeed, the entire economy—is mired in a rut, Thai Airways continues to fly high.

The carrier's Philippine business has grown at an annual clip of 8 percent to 10 percent since he took over its reins in December 1994. Frequency has increased to 10 flights a week on the Manila-Bangkok sector and seven times weekly between Manila and Osaka.

Against stiff competition (Philippine Airlines was a major force on the Bangkok route until 1998 and recently returned to the fray; Air France is also a key player), Thai Airways grabbed market leadership in one of Southeast Asia's busiest and most important routes.

What makes the achievement more remarkable is that Sakchai's six-year watch covered some of the most difficult operating environments for any business enterprise—the 1997 Asian currency meltdown and the region-wide economic collapse that followed, and more recently, the political turmoil gripping the Philippines.

For airlines, the challenge is magnified since people tend to cut back on travel in times of crisis. So how did Thai Airways cope?

"Mine is essentially a marketing job and the key to marketing is to have confidence in your product. I am fortunate to have two great products—Thai Airways and Thailand. I have full confidence in them and that makes my job a lot easier," says Khun Sakchai.

To encourage people to travel, Thai Airways went on a promotional binge, offering packages such as family golf holidays, shopping excursions and nature tours, and hefty incentives for the travel trade. In the process, Khun Sakchai presided over a sea of change in the way Filipinos regard Thailand and its flag carrier.

Previously considered as a stopover on their way to workplaces in Europe or the Middle East, Bangkok has become a popular destination for Filipino travelers. They are drawn to the Thai capital's varied attractions and bargain prices.

"Over the last four to five years, Thailand has emerged as a very economical destination in terms of air fare, accommodation and shopping. Filipinos have discovered that, if they are doing any traveling at all, going to Thailand offers the best value at this point."

The major reason for that is the movement of the Thai currency, the baht, whose dramatic drop in value since 1997 has mirrored the peso's own plunge. The upshot is that Bangkok is now the cheapest among Southeast Asian destinations, beating Hong Kong and Singapore as the favored destination for Filipino traders and shoppers.

Parallel with the switch in traveler preference, the image of Thai Airways has also changed. "During my time here, I've seen our market transform from carrying Filipino workers to Europe or Japan, to carrying Filipino tourists to Thailand," says Sakchai.

The airline has also seemingly captured a franchise over the lucrative business travel segment of the market, thanks to its reputation for quality in-flight service. With the Thai economy back in harness, Thai Airways' hold on business traffic between Manila and Bangkok is expected to strengthen even more.

"The Philippine market still has a lot of potential for growth. One advantage of Thailand is that Filipinos are beginning to feel that they have had enough of Hong Kong and Singapore. They've been to these two places many times but not to Thailand. So we have this client base that hasn't been fully served yet."

Khun Sakchai is a natural choice to oversee Thai Airways' expansion in Manila. The former corporate banker speaks fluent English and his easygoing personality blends well with Filipinos' zest for life and good humor.

"Filipinos are a happy people. Whether rain or shine, they're always smiling," he notes.

Prior to his current post, Sakchai spent eight years in the United States, where he did the rounds of the airline's sales offices in Dallas, Houston and New York, and one year as country manager in Karachi, Pakistan. He holds a Master's Degree in Economics from Lakehead University in Ontario, Canada.

In Manila, Khun Sakchai and his family (wife Arounny and two young children) are simply having a great time. He's managed to tune out the pressures by relying on his staff's teamwork and learning to play golf. "It can be very intense at times but it's a rewarding job," he says of his responsibilities.

"We have a very good team here and we have a very friendly relationship within the office. That gives me time to work on my golf handicap, which is still the maximum."

C.V. Clarete

US downturn is here: Weak spots of the New Economy

BY DENNIS M. ARROYO

THE US economy is groaning with the birth pains of the New Economy. The experience should teach nations aspiring to harness e-commerce.

"I am concerned . . . that there are some warning signs on the horizon," US President-elect George W. Bush said. "I am worried about an economic slowdown."

This downturn is bad news for the Philippines. The nation's top exports are software and electronics services.

Gallows humor

Last month, US dotcoms fired some 10,000 employees. The tech-heavy Nasdaq stock index has seen its share values plunge by 50 percent from March. Case example: The stock price of eToys has fallen from a high of $31.50 to only 20 cents these days.

In fact the Nasdaq average has dropped to its lowest level in its 29 years. Even as the new year began, the index tumbled to its lowest close since March 1999.

Gallows humor abounds in the e-commerce community. B2B usually refers to business-to-business websites. Today it means "back to bankruptcies."

There is a website called sfGirl.com that posts party announcements to launch dotcoms. In December the site helped plan San Francisco's Pink Slip Party for the fired. Fired employees go to the party to sympathize with the fellow jobless.

Patty Beron, the founder of the website, expected 50 people to show up. Around 400 came to the party of the jobless.

"Two-thirds of my friends are laid off right now," said Beron.

The fall is hitting not just the dotcoms. November 2000 was the month of 480,000 layoffs. The American retailing chain of 250 stores, Montgomery Ward, is closing after 128 years, laying off 37,000 workers.

In the first half of 2000, annualized US economic growth reached 5.2 percent. In contrast, J.P. Morgan Chase forecasted a growth rate of less than one percent for the first semester of 2001.

Reuters reported that last December manufacturing in the United States slid to its rock bottom level in almost 10 years. The National Association of Purchasing Management announced that its index of factory activity was at its lowest since April 1991.

Fast stock swings

In the New Economy, bad news hits stock prices at an even more rapid pace, as pointed out by Time magazine's Adam Cohen. Just recently, Cisco stock fell to a 52-week low.

Back in the days before stock market coverage, the rich would simply get their share price news in the morning paper. Today a housewife can check out the news and see if the entire market is going up or down. She can thus click away to follow the trend of buying or selling. Such quick access to news makes the stock market even more volatile.

In 1952, only 4 percent of Americans owned stocks. Today the ratio is 49 percent. This adds to the volatility due to the wealth effect.

The phenomenon works like this. When are you more likely to spend more, when you have a small savings account or a very large one? When your stock portfolio is meager or huge? In 1999, the Nasdaq rose by 85 percent, so consumer spending was pulled up as well.

The downside of the wealth effect is true as well. When you see your portfolio collapse, you become insecure about the future. When consumer confidence drops, society spends much less.

Within the past year the US stock market lost $2.5 trillion. It's no surprise then that consumer spending—two-thirds of total spending in the US—is down. This is also seen in inventory gathering dust. The ratio of inventories to sales is at its highest level since mid-1999.

Consumer confidence is indeed slipping. The Conference Board's key measure of consumer confidence subsided to 128.3 points in December 2000 from 132.6 in November. That's the lowest score since December 1998.

We go down together

Cohen points out that the New Economy is also synchronizing recessions. In the old days, some countries would enjoy booms while others would go bust.

Today, stock markets across the globe gyrate together. Research done in Michigan State University found a high correlation of movement between a pool of international stocks and the US Standard and Poor's 500 index. The study uncovered a 66-percent correlation.

Why the same dance steps? Perhaps it's because software manages inventory for multinationals. And stock meltdowns on Wall Street are communicated instantly across the planet, triggering slumps in Europe and Asia as well.

Speculation on weak currencies spread panic from Thailand to all of Asia and even reached Russia.

Another quirk of the New Economy is its habit of overproduction. That is another damper on the retailing industry. Put it this way: Consumers can't really keep up with the break-neck speed of technology. So the market keeps on churning out fancier and fancier devices, while the public is comfortable with what they already have.

How many people really need an MP3 player or a Palm Pilot? People wonder about the need to upgrade their computers when they can make do with the cheaper models.

These then are the weak spots of the New Economy: Volatile market swings, globalized downturns, unsold upgrades. *(Comments to dmarroyo@hotmail.com)*

THE COUNTRY'S top CEOs welcomed the chance to hear about how developments abroad affect their business. Some of the executives who attended were Rizalino Navarro, EEI Corp.; Oscar Lopez of Benpres Holdings Corp.; Peter D. Garrucho, First Philippine Holdings Corp.; Cesar Buenaventura of BFE and Oscar Reyes, Shell group of companies.

PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

DORIS Magsaysay-Ho of Magsaysay Lines and Wilfred Uytengsu of Alaska Milk Corp. take notes.

CEO forum tells local business leaders to think more global

BUSINESS leaders like Raul T. Concepcion of Concepcion Industries Inc. and Felipe B. Alfonso of the Asian Institute of Management were encouraged to look more at international economic developments.

AMBASSADOR Ramon del Rosario Sr. poses a question at the CEO Forum.

CARLOS Ejercito of United Laboratories listens intently to the discussions on the changing Asian business landscape.

PHILIPPINE business leaders often tend to be too parochial and insular.

Indeed, with the impeachment trial that has all the makings of a blockbuster soap opera, there are many compelling reasons that influence local leaders to deal with domestic concerns instead of looking outward.

This was the reason why the AIG and Philamlife groups decided to host a forum for chief executive officers dealing primarily with international issues such as the post-Asian crisis prescription for Asian economies, the latest in genetics and the possible convergence of Asian economies.

"I believe that it is appropriate for business people to see at the start of the year what the world is doing especially in these times when we are focused on local politics and the impeachment trial," says Philamlife director Roberto Romulo.

The forum was well attended with some 60 chief executives of the country's top corporations taking part in the AIG/Philam CEO Forum that started at 2 p.m. lasting all the way to dinner.

Leading the list of speakers was AIG vice chair Frank G. Wisner, who was US Ambassador to the Philippines from 1991-1992.

Wisner encouraged local business leaders to put the Philippines against the broader world economy even as he says that the Philippines is going through one of its most difficult times with raging economic and political crises.

"You have lost so much ground compared to other countries and the longer before the crises gets resolved, the more difficult it will be for the Philippines to recover. As a businessman, I can only hope that the Philippines gets over this quickly," Wisner adds. *Tina Arceo-Dumlao*

THE CEO/AIG Forum at the Mandarin Oriental was well-attended by the country's top business leaders including Henry Sy, founder of the SM Group of Companies, and Johnip Cua of multinational Procter and Gamble.

FORMER US Ambassador to the Philippines Frank Wisner, now vice chair of AIG, (with Washington Sycip) says the Philippines is going through its most difficult times since the Marcos years.

PHILAM Group chair Jose L. Cuisia Jr. and Washington Sycip, founder of the SGV group, conceptualized the CEO Forum.

ROBERTO Romulo of the Philam group with Cesar Virata.

Asia welcomes US rate cut

(From page C1)

The benchmark index in Hong Kong rose 4 percent Thursday and one percent more Friday, while Taiwan's main index surged 3 percent Friday. On Monday, the Hang Seng Index inched down 0.07 percent, and the index in Taiwan ended 2 percent lower on worries over the Nasdaq in New York.

The South Korea index rose 4 percent to its highest close in nearly three months Friday and added one percent Monday.

Monday's trading showed how hard it is to predict whether the rallies will last, but previous Asian market surges following dramatic Fed moves provide some guidance.

The Nikkei in Tokyo pushed up about 25 percent in each of the 12 months after the Fed's half-point reduction in July 1992 and after the Fed last changed rates between meetings in October 1998.

In South Korea, the main stock index rose 43 percent in the year after July 1992 and 106 percent after October 1998, as the nation rebounded from the region's financial crisis.

Asia is still smarting from that recession, which pushed hundreds of companies into bankruptcy and sent investors fleeing.

"The rate cut is going to be a psychological plus for American consumers," said Testuo Kitagawa, spokesman for Toyota Motor Corp., Japan's largest carmaker.

Toyota, which has posted strong sales despite a slowdown among rival automakers, had hoped for slightly higher sales this year. With the Fed's rate cut, expectations are heightened.

Asia's economic health hinges so much on the American economy that a "soft landing" is crucial in any US slowdown, analysts say.

Shinichi Ichikawa, strategist with Credit Suisse First Boston Securities in Tokyo, expects the Tokyo stock market to recover further in the next couple of months.

Frank Jeng, marketing manager of Via Technologies, Taiwan's largest chip-designer, was less sanguine, noting the Taipei market was merely recovering earlier losses.

"It's positive news, but we cannot count on the rate cut to drive up demand for computers" in the United States, he said. PC sales in the US leveled off last year amid a general consumer spending slowdown.

One advantage for Asia is that the rate cut has not yet pushed the dollar down; lower interest rates tend to decrease the value of that nation's currency.

But the dollar could weaken in coming months if the Fed cuts rates further, as many economists expect. That could hurt Asian exporters by dampening overseas profits and making their products more expensive across the Pacific.

Lower US interest rates are sure to be good news for Hong Kong, which pegs its dollar to the US dollar and centers around two big industries highly sensitive to rates—banking and property.

Hong Kong commercial banks cut interest rates by a half-point Friday, following the Fed's move. That should help people pay mortgages, businesses borrow money and encourage investors.

Wong Kwong-fei, for one, was hoping to get a break on the $1,667 mortgage he pays every month for his 55-square-meter apartment.

"It will help relieve the pressure on the mortgage I'm paying," said the 38-year-old maintenance man.

But Lee Keun-mo, chief analyst at Good Morning Securities in Seoul, foresees only a short-term lift to stock markets.

"We must remember that the Fed rate cut was designed to slow the pace of the economic slowdown in the United States," Lee said. "It is not going to accelerate US economic growth." *AP*

Empty promises of the rich . . .

(From page C1)

mocracy can solve Asia's basic economic and social problems. "We can move further if we adopt a certain form of discipline just like in the early years of martial law. Our government should follow the lead of governments in Malaysia, Korea and Taiwan. They have corruption but they have infrastructure; we have corruption but we have no infrastructure."

Sycip is optimistic that recent developments would finally prod upper income groups "that demonstrations are just the beginning of a process that should reduce their own privileges, increase their tax consciousness and upgrade their ethical standards."

Aside from the apathy of the gilded class, Sycip said that the country's problems could also be traced to the weakness of elected officials or political appointees.

accenture

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ON JANUARY 1, 2001, the world's largest consulting firm became Accenture.

As of midnight December 31, 2000, the firm ceased operating under the name Andersen Consulting and entered the new century as Accenture.

"Today we begin the first page of a new chapter in our history, as we continue to rewrite the rules of the consulting industry," said Joe W. Forehand, managing partner and CEO of Accenture. "This new chapter will tell the story of a firm that grows to become one of the world's leading companies, bringing innovations that improve the way the world works and lives."

His comments came as Accenture launched an ambitious offline and online advertising campaign across 46 countries, intended to establish Accenture firmly in the minds of clients, employees and potential recruits.

JOE W. FOREHAND, Accenture managing partner and CEO

Accenture is redefining its industry by creating an entirely new type of consulting organization, explained Forehand. "We are building a network of businesses to meet the needs of any 21st century organization – consulting, technology, outsourcing, alliances and venture capital," he said. "This network is made up of interrelated businesses and more than 100 alliance relationships all focused on knowledge and innovation in management and technology."

Forehand said the real power of the new organization is the synergy between Accenture's traditional consulting and outsourcing business – with its channel strength, relationships and proven solutions – and the firm's venture capital business, operating companies and alliances – with their emphasis on new technologies and business models.

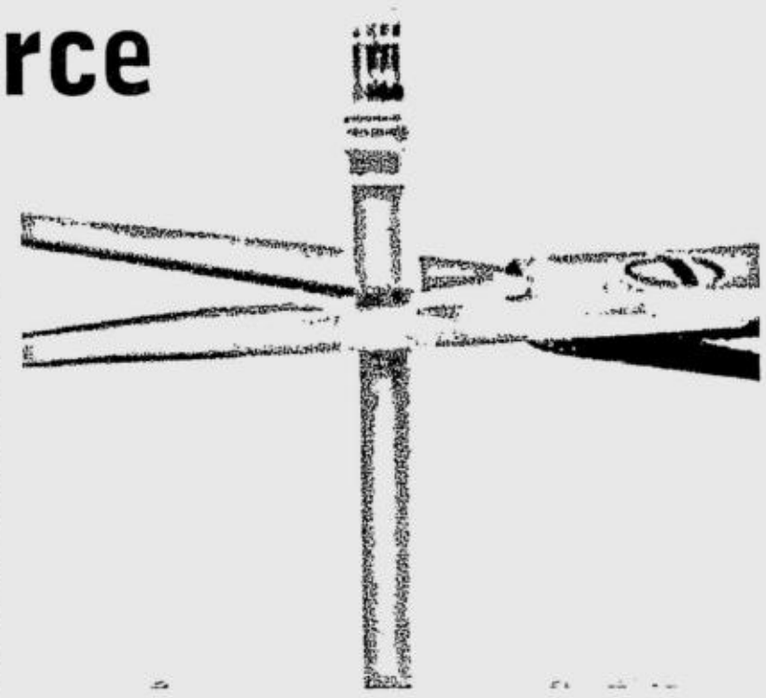
"Accenture is all about exceeding expectations as we provide market-ready solutions that will take companies to a successful future," said Forehand.

About Accenture

Accenture, formerly known as Andersen Consulting, is a $10 billion global management and technology consulting organization. The firm is reinventing itself to become the market maker, architect and builder of the new economy, bringing innovations to improve the way the world works and lives. More than 70,000 people in 46 countries deliver a wide range of specialized capabilities and solutions to clients across all industries. Under its strategy, the firm is building a network of businesses to meet the full range of client needs — consulting, technology, outsourcing, alliances and venture capital. Accenture's home page address is http://www.accenture.com.

Renamed. Redefined. Reborn.

Cutting loose: What m-commerce really means for your business



BY GLOVER T. FERGUSON AND THOMAS H. PIKE

THE BUZZ today may be about cell phones and PDAs that connect to the Internet. In fact, a much more sweeping change is under way – the emergence of a world of seamless, continuous economic interaction. Call it u-commerce: ubiquitous, untethered, unbounded.

YOU'VE got to sympathize with executives these days. Just when they thought they were getting their arms around e-commerce, someone came along and said things were about to change again. The new challenge, they were warned, was to figure out what to do about m-commerce

Of course, just about everyone is aware of the explosive growth in the use of cell phones and other handheld devices that underpin mobile commerce. But CEOs around the world are right to wonder if there is anything here beyond the hype that promises consumers they can operate vending machines with their cell phones or trade stocks while jogging. They want to know what m-commerce means for their businesses and how urgent it is to embrace this latest technology-driven change.

We believe that mobile commerce is simply the next step – albeit a very big step – toward something even more encompassing: universal, everyday, around-the-clock interconnectivity. The buzz today may be about cell phones and personal digital assistants that can connect to the Internet. In fact, a much more sweeping change is under way – the emergence of a world of seamless, continuous economic and social interaction.

What we are seeing is the dawn of u-commerce – commerce that is:

Ubiquitous - taking place everywhere, at all times;

Untethered - not constrained by the lines and hard wires of traditional computing and telephony;

Unbounded - no longer limited to the traditional definition of commerce.

Not just a matter of transactions, u-commerce encompasses the flow of information between a business and its employees, supply chain partners, customers and various smart appliances in ways that will either save money or generate new revenue.

Business leaders focused today on e-commerce or even m-commerce should look further out on the horizon, preparing in addition for the challenges and opportunities of u-commerce. Ultimately, they need to think of u-commerce as an "and," not an "or." It should not be seen as a replacement for e-commerce, m-commerce, or bricks and mortar. A more likely scenario is that it will be a fusion of all three, with people moving seamlessly from one to the other, depending on their location and the nature of the need.

Moving into u-commerce is not a replacement for anything your company is doing today, but an extension of it. And it will be mandatory, not optional.

In this world, people will be connected to one another, and to the Web, in a variety of ways that we can only begin to imagine. Along with computers and handheld devices, we may use our televisions, video games and automobile consoles?giving us "t-commerce," "v-commerce" and "a-commerce."

We will be connected faster, more continuously, and without the constraints of space and time that limit today's desktop devices. A cell phone, for example, could be an always-on Internet connection, used as a mobile device when the person is traveling, or hooked into a terminal at home or the office.

Objects also will communicate with one another or with people, transmitting information about their location and status, or taking action and even doing business on people's behalf. An appliance or automobile, for example, will sense impending mechanical problems and schedule maintenance; personal-finance robots will make market transactions automatically according to preprogrammed guidelines.

Driving forces

This isn't science fiction. U-commerce will play a major role in our work and lives because it is consistent with drivers of behavior that are already at work.

Mobility

Individual consumers already approach their lives in general with a kind of fast-food mentality. In developed countries, people multitask, using time spent in the car, online or on the street not only to eat but to read or talk as well. Making purchases on the go is a logical extension.

Similarly, in business, employees at all levels are on the move. Today's employee doesn't work just at the office?and indeed may not even have an office. Work gets done at home, in the car, at the customer or client location, or in any available cubicle. The efficiency and productivity of all those individuals can be improved by any of a number of portable devices.

Once connectivity and Internet access are no longer limited to the personal computer, they will become available to people who were never deskbound, like doctors, teachers, electricians and farmers. The opportunity to reach and serve such people at virtually any time opens up new business opportunities.

Service

The explosion of computing power has enabled businesses to personalize their products and services based on what they have learned about their customers; therefore, businesses can offer those customers a higher level of service.

With cell phones, PDAs or even more futuristic forms of ubiquitous access that we can't yet imagine, that capability is increased because the customer can, in effect, be anywhere. Several automakers, for example, already offer drivers a variety of personal assistance and services, often based on the geographic position and status of their vehicle at that moment. As access becomes continuous, customer expectations for continuous personal service are likely to increase accordingly.

Lower-cost access

Phones, pagers and PDAs cost less than computers. In the consumer realm, that means Internet access is becoming available even to people whose lifestyle or financial situation would keep them from buying a computer.

This has important implications for the so-called digital divide that exists not only within the economies of wealthy developed countries, where many citizens still do not have computers, but also between the developed and developing worlds. Low-cost access could greatly boost Internet use in countries like China and Brazil, where cell phone use is becoming relatively common.

Within businesses, mobile devices can help control the cost of extending intranet or Internet access Currently, the cost of computers and networks is the fastest growing component of information technology expenses. Mobile devices also can contribute to greater overall employee productivity

Bumps in the road

To be sure, u-commerce will not burst upon the scene full-blown tomorrow. Like all new technologies, m-commerce and u-commerce still have obstacles to overcome.

Absence of clear standards

Unlike Europe, which has consolidated largely around a single frequency and signaling protocol, the United States has phones supporting three different standards to enable communications in various regions of the country. This problem isn't likely to be solved through either government mandate or competitor consensus, so the "winner" will likely be whichever standard can achieve a dominant share first.

Another possibility is that no standard will win. The problem simply may be overpowered with layers of technology, just as browsers can handle XML, HTML and Java.

Limitations of current handheld devices Web access just isn't the same on a screen not much bigger than a business card, and inputting data can be hard on a cell phone pad. Voice-recognition technology is improving but is still imperfect. Meanwhile, compact keyboards that attach to mobile devices (such as PDAs) exist today; holographic projection screens are under development.

Such advances would make mobile devices more user-friendly. But the eventual solution still is likely to be an integrated network of multiple devices, with the user choosing whichever is appropriate to the need at the moment.

Need for back-office systems

Here is an often-cited scenario: A person is walking down the street, decides to get something to eat and-using a mobile device?checks out local restaurants, gets directions to the restaurant of choice, has a meal and pays the bill. It sounds good, but the systems to make this happen are not yet in place.

Imagine the billing and settlement process. Many parties contributed to getting our customer fed: the portal that carried the restaurant information, the carrier that calculated the customer's proximity to the restaurant and provided directions, the restaurant itself and the company that provided the mechanism for payment. All deserve a cut-but who does the calculation and distribution, and how? There are other pitfalls. Payment systems are still vulnerable to hackers when data is sent via mobile devices. Privacy is also a concern. Before long, every cell phone will come with GPS (global positioning system). That's exciting for marketers, but customers are skittish about unwanted intrusions and the feeling of being followed.

Lack of killer apps

It was e-mail that made Internet access a must-have. To date, no comparable killer m-commerce application has emerged on a global level.

In the business-to-consumer realm, I-Mode has caught the fancy of the Japanese, especially teens. I-Mode offers users communication (phone, e-mail); dozens of services, from the practical (ticket booking, recipes) to the recreational (games, karaoke), plus several whimsical options for standby screen displays More than 13 million subscribers have signed on in Japan, but I-Mode hasn't caught on outside the country. Nothing like it has emerged in Europe or the United States, though some speculate that short messaging may fill that role.

Cultural and regional differences

Europe is ahead of the United States in adopting m-commerce, in part because European mobile phone users do not pay for incoming calls. As a result, they are more willing than Americans to leave their phones on. Streaming information and services to a user's mobile device, therefore, is more likely to be successful in Europe than in the United States.

Another regional difference is the extent to which mobile devices are the primary means of Internet access rather than being an adjunct to computer-based access. Today more than 41 percent of US households have access to the Internet via in-home computers, that figure is 27 percent in Japan and much lower in many parts of Europe.

Finally, the widespread use of mobile devices in Japan may be partly a result of the country's commuting patterns. The typical Japanese commutes 54 minutes per day, primarily by train, which allows ample time and opportunity to work or play on a mobile device. In contrast, 70 percent of US commuters spend less than 30 minutes per day in transit, and 87 percent of all commutes are by car.

These obstacles will slow the arrival of u-commerce and make its rate of adoption uneven around the world. But they will not stop it.

First steps

What will u-commerce mean for your business? What opportunities does it offer? We can only give that dreaded consultants' answer: "It depends."

It does depend-on your company's geography, industry and specific situation. U-commerce may become a necessity either because your customers demand it or because it is key to maintaining a competitive business system. Or it may offer opportunities to fundamentally transform your business model.

But at this early stage of this – or any – technology's development and implementation, it is hard to know the answers with any certainty. The challenge for a business leader is to anticipate what u-commerce might mean by starting to ask the right questions now.

Can u-commerce help you build a new, durable relationship with customers? Think about:

Moments of value

The mobile aspect of u-commerce means that you can be with the customer at the moment of need. What could it mean for your business to be in almost continuous contact with customers? To allow customers to access information on their own from anywhere at any hour? To make purchases or transactions any time that buyers decide they want something?

Product to service

Can u-commerce help your customers not just buy your product but use it successfully? Can you, for example, train your customers how to get full value from the product? Help customers anticipate or avoid problems?

Discrete to continuous

Can the technologies underlying u-commerce help you repackage or reprice your product? Can you offer the product or service in smaller increments? Vary the pricing structure by number of units, time of day, location of usage or some other dimension?

Can u-commerce create a new way of doing your business? Think about:

The flow of information

In politics, a common piece of advice is "Follow the money." Here the challenge is to follow the flow of information.

What kind of information moves among employees, and how does it move? Along the supply chain? To suppliers, customers, partners? How could those flows of information be shortened, sped up, rerouted or eliminated if people could communicate instantly at any hour? If people could "talk" to objects, or if objects could communicate with one another?

Location, location, location

Mobile technology offers an unprecedented ability to know where someone or something is at any given moment. Suppose your employees were always in touch? Had continuous access to company data and resources? What if you could track your purchases, inventory or shipments minute to minute? If you could pinpoint your customers? How could this knowledge change the way you operate?

Answers to these questions will vary from company to company, of course, and visions of the u-commerce future will differ. Nonetheless, all business leaders should take the fundamental first steps now.

Get a handle on the technology

Nothing can replace firsthand experience with the advantages and limitations of today's leading-edge devices and applications. Reading about other applications of this emerging technology (such as tagging devices) can help round out your understanding of what it can bring.

Team up on research

Why go through the learning process alone? In the early stages, team up with other companies, even potential competitors, to jointly research usage and preference patterns around a suite of applications. Share the results, then separate and enter the marketplace as competitors, partners or allies-as the situation warrants.

Grab the low-hanging fruit

At the corporate level, start smart. Pick some u-commerce applications that have the potential to be profitable; these will certainly be learning experiences. Some applications (particularly in business to business) offer such immediate and high payback that any risk of choosing the "wrong" standard or technology is minimal. Treat these applications as pilot projects. Rather than setting high profitability goals, use them as ways to learn how the technology really works, how people really use it.

The technological revolution of the past decade has brought profound changes in our working and private lives and surging productivity for many businesses. As e-commerce is transformed into m-commerce, and as u-commerce looms on the horizon, it's clear that this revolution is far from over.

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Rise of the digital CFO

BY TROY B. BARTON

AT FIRST glance, the chief financial officer might appear to be in a less than enviable position these days. Working in the tumultuous world of e-commerce, where the rules for business seem to change daily, CFOs must respond not only to external pressures that are redefining operating conditions and the finance function itself, but also to internal pressures to deliver more relevant and value-added services at higher speed.

And, of course, they also have their day jobs: As their companies undergo often radical change, finance executives must continue to maintain fiscal prudence, discipline and excellence.

In fact, however, this may well be the best of times to be a CFO. The same forces that have created the new economy also have created an unprecedented opportunity for finance executives to assume new positions of leadership in which they can play crucial roles in delivering value and improving the overall performance of the company.

Pursuit of excellence

CFOs once focused their efforts on positioning their companies for long-term growth, basing their strategies on historical performance and strict performance measures. Today they must take on the additional responsibility of providing their companies with innovative models for managing fluctuating market shares, new revenue/cost streams and unanticipated performance management issues.

Yet despite all the upheaval, the CFO's job has not changed in one critical respect. It is still defined by three core finance activities: governance, business-decision support and transaction processing. In their pursuit of excellence in these activities, today's CFOs will be helped by new, Web-enabled capabilities that provide an effective approach for managing the challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities of e-commerce.

Governance

For the CFO, governance is about fiscal leadership: making decisions involving investment appraisal and performance management for economic return.

But how does the CFO remain fiscally prudent in the e-environment, where old performance measures no longer do the job? No one wants to pay the price for a lost opportunity, which is a real danger if strategies are not formed quickly and decisively in the fast-paced world of e-commerce.

According to a recent survey,* only 17 percent of CFOs and senior finance executives feel that established financial processes can be "very effectively" used to account for new revenue/cost streams. That is why a new understanding of governance is critical not only to maximizing value in business but also to developing and evaluating e-commerce initiatives.

CFOs are rethinking the finance function how it works, what the drivers and measures are, and how skills can be best utilized.

Some of the most significant changes are occurring in the treasury function, particularly in cash management. For example, by using the Internet, the finance organization can automatically route available cash to profitable investments and increase the accuracy and timeliness of cash forecasting. Web-based solutions also enable the global management of the treasury process, enhance enterprise control and audit capabilities, and improve communications with finance institutions.

A Web-enabled treasury function brings a number of benefits. It allows increased control over cash positions and creates a portal for managing portfolios, risk and the trading of financial products. It also provides easier access to banking information as well as the ability to link cash flow forecasting to the operating systems and the budgeting and planning processes.

Another area of responsibility that is undergoing significant change is investment appraisal. In a more traditional business setting, decisions about investment funding are made on an annual basis. But in the e-commerce realm, they often are made monthly or even more frequently.

As a result, finance executives are moving from traditional analysis to valuation models in which they value both existing operations and new opportunities based on the existing alternatives. The use of portfolio management is becoming increasingly common: Multiple investment options are funded for a shorter duration to discover which are truly profitable. (For a related article, see "Get real," Outlook, June 2000.)

Once e-commerce initiatives are funded, new program management capabilities help them get off the ground quickly and deliver appropriate results. These capabilities support the management and coordination of projects across the company and allow the CFO to monitor them to ensure that they have proper business-case development and management, clearly defined goals and sound prioritization.

Risk, of course, is another prominent feature of the new economy landscape, and e-commerce will challenge existing internal control frameworks and risk management techniques. This is, after all, an environment in which a popular auction website lost somewhere between $3 million and $5 million in fees in a single day due to a technology-related outage.

Companies will have to decide what levels of risk are acceptable. Managing multiple third-party entities, for example, involves an entire suite of risks. New business partners must be chosen with considerable care; access to insider information must be restricted to parties with legally protected relationships. Knowledge capital and technology need to be carefully audited, while stable technology integration and data integrity between business partners must be ensured.

These are challenging but exciting times for CFOs. The same forces that have created the new economy have given them the opportunity to assume new positions of leadership and the tools for improving the overall performance of their companies.

When a large chemicals company recently began selling its product on a business-to-business e-commerce exchange, it had controls in place to ensure that the individuals conducting transactions were authorized by their companies to do so. It also used a system that categorizes each company trading on the exchange by size, years in business and reputation.

Business decision support

In the new economy, the decision-making time frame has been shortened dramatically. For the finance organization, this has required a new approach to reporting, analysis, planning and budgeting. CFOs must now draw on an increasingly complex matrix of functions, disciplines and channels to measure performance and make investment decisions.

Not surprisingly, given the demands of the e-economy, companies are moving toward ever-shorter planning cycles. Indeed, our research shows that just 6 percent to 7 percent of companies review their e-commerce strategies only quarterly or annually. By 2005 more than half of e-commerce initiatives will have planning cycles of less than a year.

As CFOs move away from historical reporting to real-time data and continual forecasting, they are employing new Internet-based information tools to help them make management decisions at high speed. Finance portals, for instance, are websites customized to reflect the specific roles and responsibilities of the user; they provide access to real-time instead of static data.

These integrated sites also provide access to common applications and links to management reports, accounting policies, financial rates, and competitor and market data, all of which are used for comparative analysis. A single point of access to all financial tools and knowledge lets finance executives focus on using information to support better business decisions.

Because traditional management methods do not support e-commerce ventures and operating models, companies are instituting new e-enabled performance measures that evaluate new channels, analyze internal and external factors that affect the enterprise, and assess strategic objectives for new business models.

One online retailer's website, for instance, has traditional tools for merchandising, content management, fulfillment and payment. But it also features a balanced scorecard that measures achievement levels for companywide objectives and generates regular reports on such key performance factors as consumer and industry awareness. As a result, the company can easily and continually measure overall performance.

Web-based technology has also greatly enhanced budgeting and forecasting capabilities. These new tools allow finance executives to do collaborative, real-time planning, forecasting and analysis. And they provide continuously updated versions of the budget- an essential asset when making vital business decisions in the e-economy.

With this capability, a leading interactive-entertainment company was able to reengineer its worldwide financial planning, forecasting and actuals reporting processes and systems, and construct a Web-enabled data-storage system with reporting, analysis and project-registration abilities. As a result, the company has access to more accurate, timely information about product profitability and is able to make better decisions.

The key to making vital business decisions in the faster-paced e-economy is Web-based reporting, which provides "anywhere, anytime" access to key financial information and metrics.

This capability increases efficiency by introducing convenient "self-service" models that reduce the cost (chiefly headcount) associated with generating reports, that increase timeliness by providing continuously updated financial results, and that broaden accessibility by making centralized sources of information available on the Web. One large multinational manufacturer was able to reduce the closing cycle by 3.5 days and the headcount for general ledger processes by 17 percent.

Freed from time-consuming reporting tasks, finance analysts can spend more time analyzing-and because their forecasts are based on more and better data, they are more thorough and reliable.

Transaction processing

Despite the emphasis on new e-commerce strategies, some of the CFO's more traditional concerns remain. ERP implementations have moved finance toward higher levels of efficiency. But the finance organization still feels intense pressure to reduce the cost of processing transactions further.

Additional Web-based tools will complement these efforts, in part by supporting "lights-out accounting," in which transactions are processed without costly human intervention. (There is a managerial downside here for finance executives: This approach will require complex, seamless collaboration with the IT department, both inside the organization and outside.)

Companies can also reduce the costly internal administration of basic finance functions. One way to do this is through the automated processing of T&E reports. At one financial services firm, these Web-based solutions cut the cost of processing a single expense report from between $25 and $30 to just a few dollars and shortened the cycle time from between four and six weeks to an average of four days. T&E processing is also a good candidate for outsourcing as a means to further lower costs.

On another front, electronic bill presentment and payment can strengthen customer relationships and substantially reduce transaction costs by enabling customers to view and pay bills on the Internet. Bills are displayed either on the vendor's website or via third-party consolidators, such as banks, the postal service or Internet portals.

The EBPP capability can be used for both business-to-consumer and business-to-business transactions, and it appears positioned for significant growth over the next three years.A large biller with 50 million annual invoices can save upwards of $30 million a year by reducing the cost per bill by just 66 cents, a conservative number by some estimates.

Although EBPP adoption has been slow, it continues to show promise; for example, e-marketplaces are including this capability as part of their offerings. As acceptance grows, further benefits will be realized through collaboration on the investigation and resolution of invoice discrepancies.

In addition to being cost-effective, the finance organization must help with the ongoing task of developing business opportunities and evaluating their performance. This process will require rolling reporting and real-time access to financial and operational information. This is where the virtual close comes in.

Through the use of a virtual close, CFOs will begin to focus more on real-time financial performance than on traditional periodic profit-and-loss statements. The virtual close offers company decision makers immediate insight into the business, allowing them to identify developing trends and?once again?to act more quickly. Companies typically close over a period of four to eight days, with many taking longer than 12 days. Nevertheless, research shows that 45 percent of companies surveyed plan to be closing their books virtually by 2005.

The virtual close will allow companies to proactively identify both threats and opportunities without waiting for the end of the month or the quarter. Daily or even hourly data on sales and margins will allow finance executives to respond quickly and appropriately to real-time changes in the marketplace. Efficient data transfer will reduce process cycle times, supporting low-cost, back-end processes, while the resulting real-time vertical exchange of information will support more effective partnerships with customers and vendors.

Nevertheless, this particular approach will be more helpful to some companies than to others. For example, real-time information can significantly improve inventory management, which is critical in sectors such as manufacturing and telecommunications, where inventory tends to become obsolete quickly. For other sectors-service-oriented industries, for example?the effort would be better directed toward refining predictive models and tying actual results to these models.

Pivotal role

These are exciting and challenging times for CFOs who want to leverage the value that new finance initiatives present.

They can supplement governance metrics with processes that make the investment appraisal of new ventures more accurate. They can lower costs by applying new finance capabilities to the transaction-processing activities. And they can become more effective leaders by introducing technology that will enable the kind of rapid decision making and implementation demanded by the new economy.

The role of finance remains pivotal to the long-term success of all companies, whether dot-com or bricks-and-mortar. The finance executives who survive and thrive in the ever-changing environment of e-commerce will be those who recognize and pursue these innovative solutions-and who keep in mind that "CFO" also means "critical financial opportunities."

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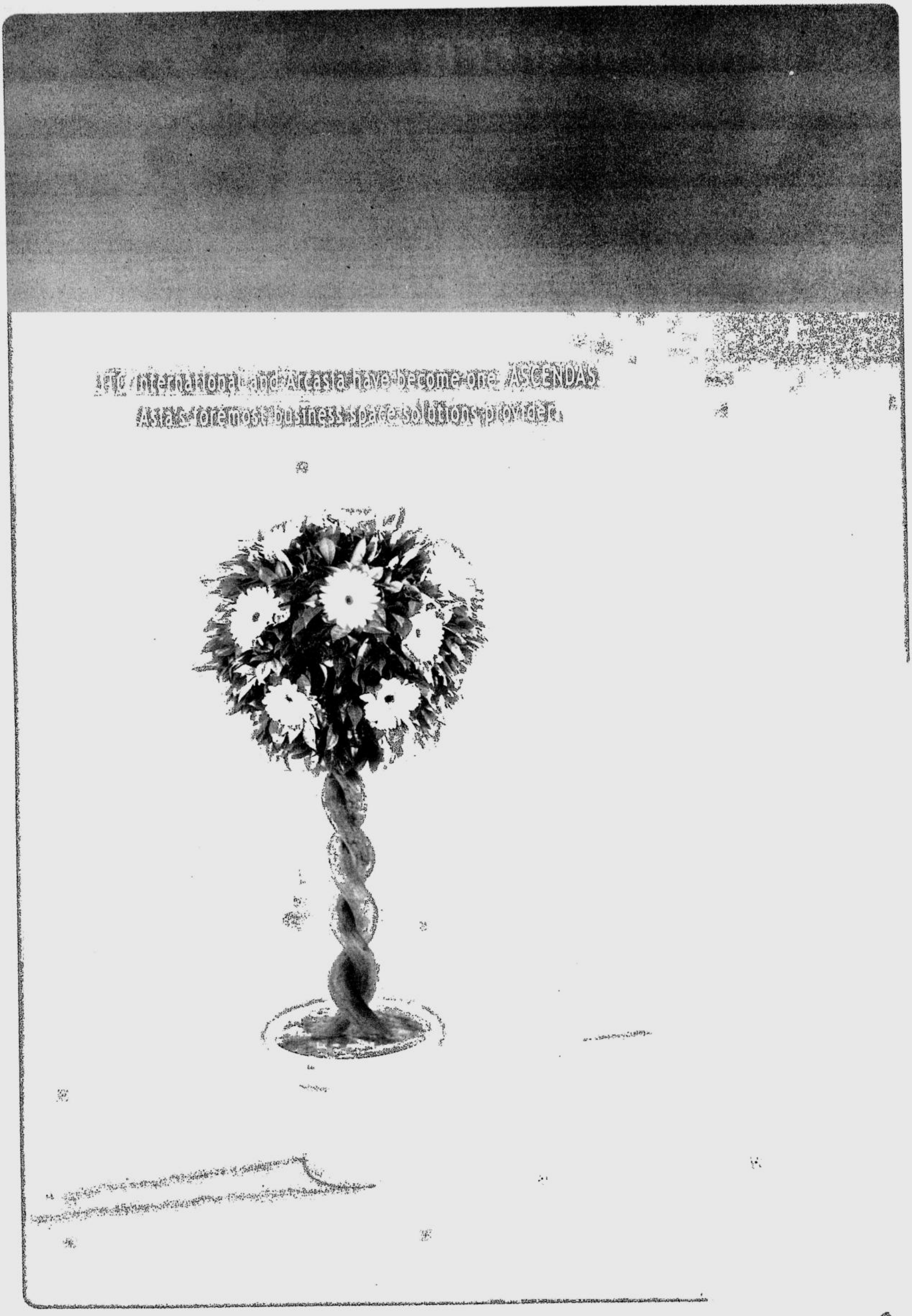

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LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor ▫ LITO B. ZULUETA, Subsection Editor

Arts/Design

The Settha Palace experience in Vientiane

Nostalgia and stateliness set a Laotian hotel apart from the rest

REMOTE Vientiane may have a backwater feel to it, but it is a sleeper of a city that weaves a subtle magic around visitors who patiently take the time to discover what it has.

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

It is the capital of one of the few countries in the world that radiates a center of calm enveloping its entire population. Laos moves to a peaceful rhythm of its own. Even the Mekong, the majestic river that connects all of Indochina, respects the Laotian calm, reverently slowing down to a glide as it passes Vientiane before resuming its mighty downriver flow.

Time is not the only thing that stands still in tranquil Vientiane. Since not much moves, dust covers the city, settling over everything—cars, trees, sidewalks and buildings, casting a reddish-ochre veil that blurs all surfaces into soft focus as it cloaks a city that appears to be sus-

THE SETTHA/ p. D2

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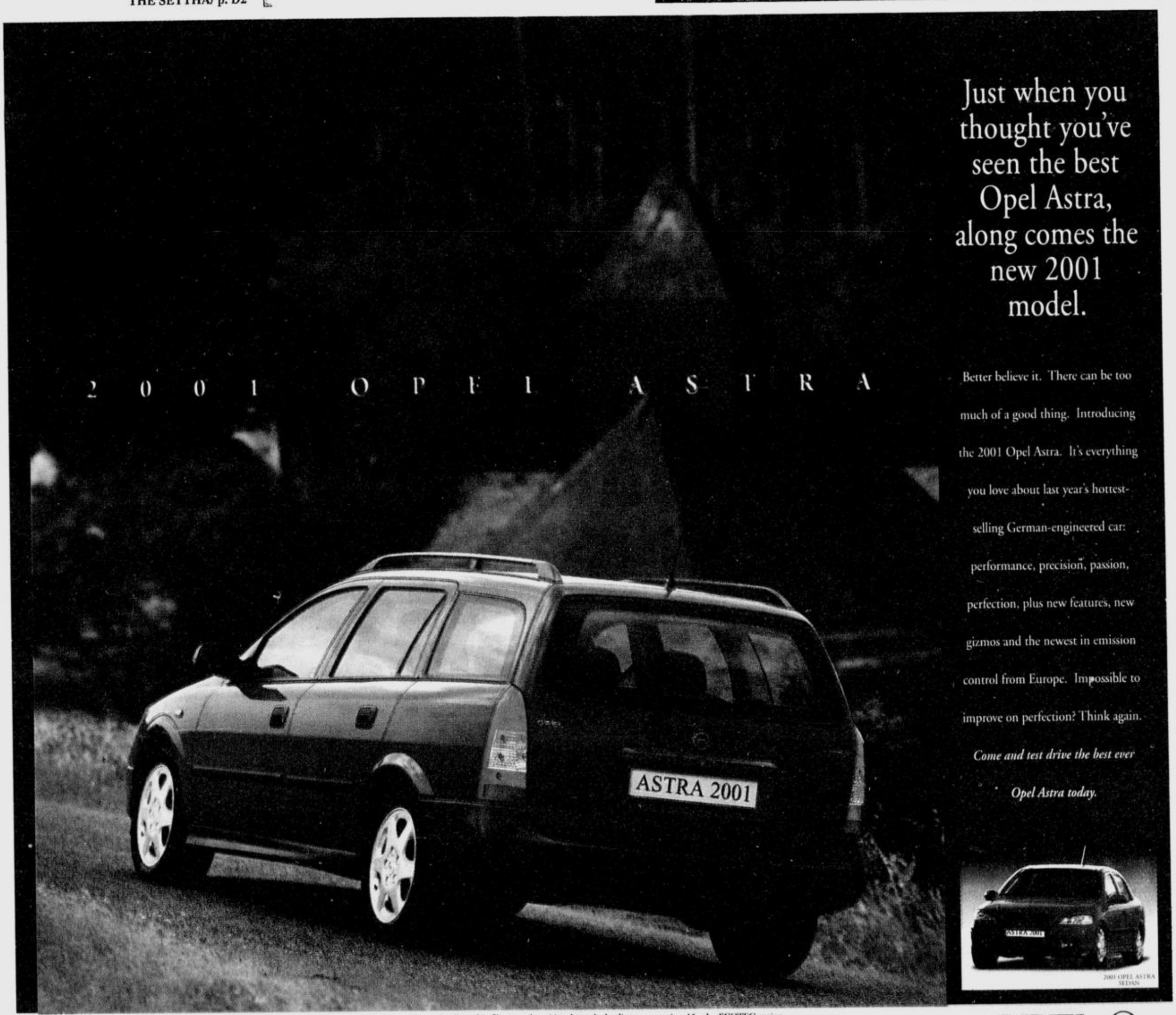

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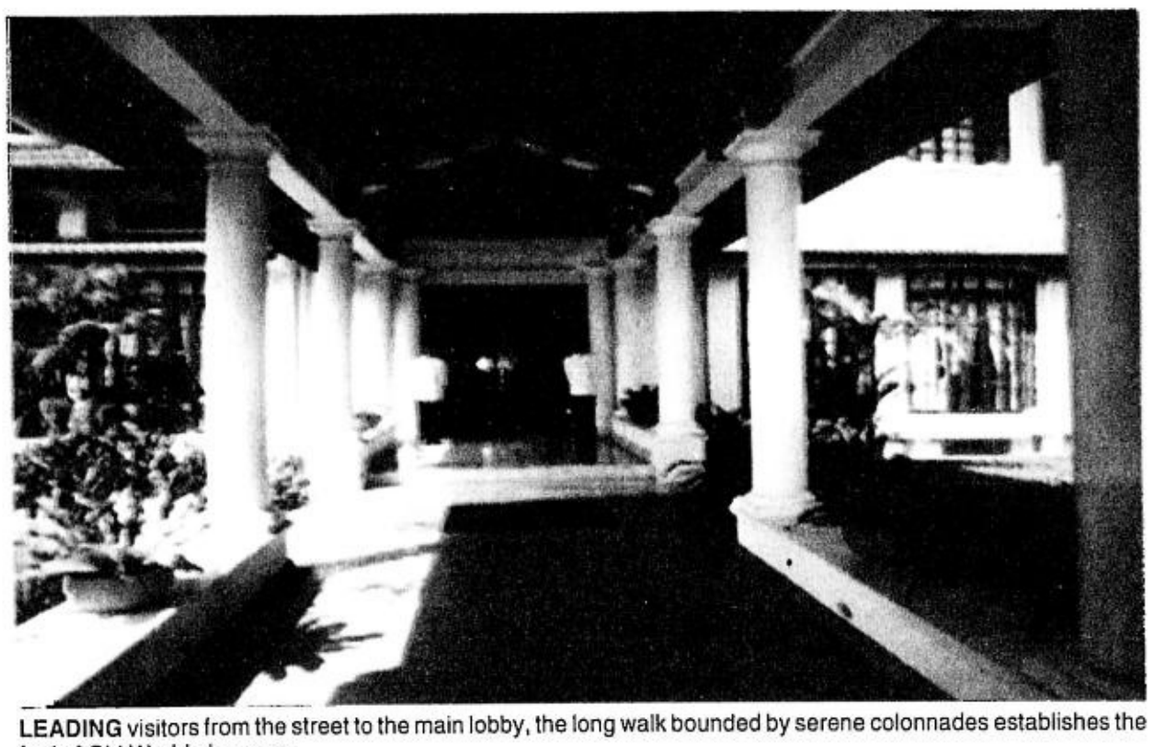
AutoWorld

ARRANGED around a reproduction of a Provencal village fountain, the outdoor terrace reinterprets the French sidewalk café with a Lao accent.



LEADING visitors from the street to the main lobby, the long walk bounded by serene colonnades establishes the feel of Old World elegance.

The Settha Palace experience in Vientiane

(From page D1)

pended between breaths. But there is energy in the stillness of Vientiane.

Vientiane's cityscape straddles different realities. The spiritual dimension is of prime importance. Interconnected by a network of tree-lined streets, needle-sharp spires from the stupas of the numerous Buddhist temples of different sizes and varying degrees of opulence pierce the sky with needles of gold that reflect the sunlight filtered by the thick canopy of trees in the city. Beneath the spires, the rich coloration of temple façades in tones of red, gold, green and orange shimmer with the same intriguing sheen as the metallic Laotian hand-woven fabric.

Another Vientiane reality gives testimony to the culture's overlay of French heritage. Low-rise French colonial buildings, most of them now looking tired and worn, house the principal government offices. Radiating Champs-Elysées-style around the triumphal Patou Xay arch, tree-lined avenues are planned with the same élan that evokes the grand boulevards of Paris but executed in a downscaled provincial version. The streets and colonial architecture speak French but heavily overlaid with a Laotian accent. The fusion of both types of architecture bestows a special graciousness and charm that is found only in Laos.

Many of the streets, public monuments and colonial buildings have not been remodeled or upgraded. In Vientiane one gets the feeling that whatever which can be left alone stays that way.

Compared to the other capitals of the world, Vientiane is definitely small-scale. Many of its fine architecture is hidden behind crumbling walls that are found in potholed streets and dusty cul-de-sacs. It is a city that does not give up its secrets easily to the visitor.

Fortunately for me, Philippine Ambassador to Laos Jaime Yambao had the keys to all of the secret doors of Vientiane. The Settha Palace Hotel was one of his surprises.

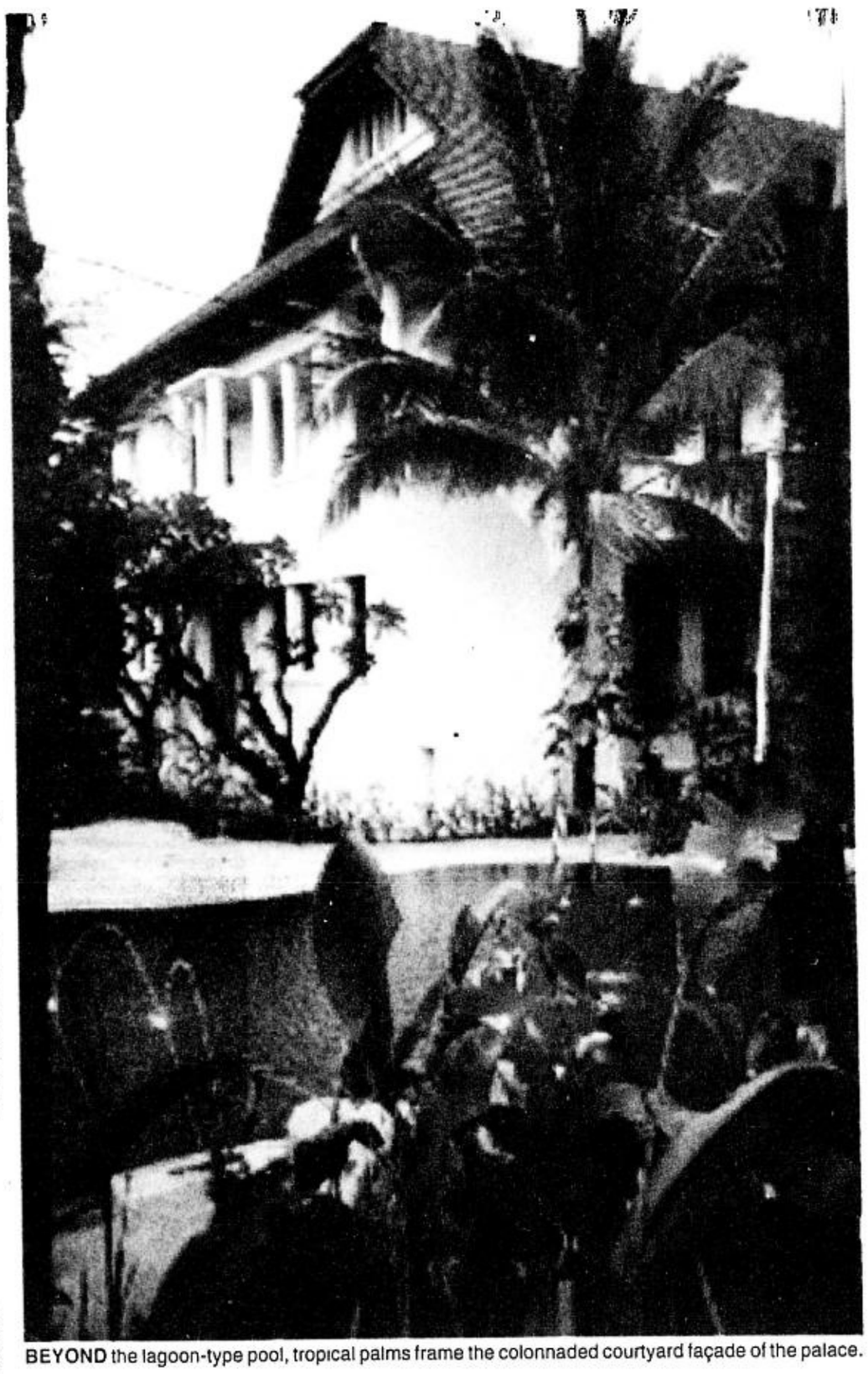
The Settha Palace was originally a guest house for visiting French officials. Nobody knew the exact date of its construction that looks as if it could have been done in the late 1920s, but it is documented that in the 1940s the building was expanded by 10 rooms.

Nobody could trace the history of the hotel. Original architectural plans were nonexistent and old pictures were hard to find. Information was needed in order for one to know what the structure and its interiors looked like originally. To guide the restoration, one must search in the museums and the French Embassy. One must interview older folk.

The son of the hotel operator before 1975 returned to Vientiane in the 1990s, revisited the skeleton of the property and decided to restore it as a boutique hotel. It finally opened its doors in 1998.

The existing structure stood abandoned in a time warp since the Communist Pathet Lao overthrew the Lao King and seized power in 1975. Being overrun with squatter families for decades, the abandoned structure was surprisingly sound even if it took three weeks to pump the stagnant mix of water and sewage out of the basement. The original exterior façades of the building were retained but the interior renovation was total.

Guided by the expertise of a Filipino architect, the renovation preserved original interior details. A new electrical system and air-conditioning ducts were inserted beneath the steep roof gables. High ceilings and wood mouldings were replaced. Walls painted off-white brought back the colonial ambiance. A former function room became the new lobby. Its rosewood floors rise to a dramatic staircase, the area's focal point at the end of the lobby together with a large crystal chandelier.



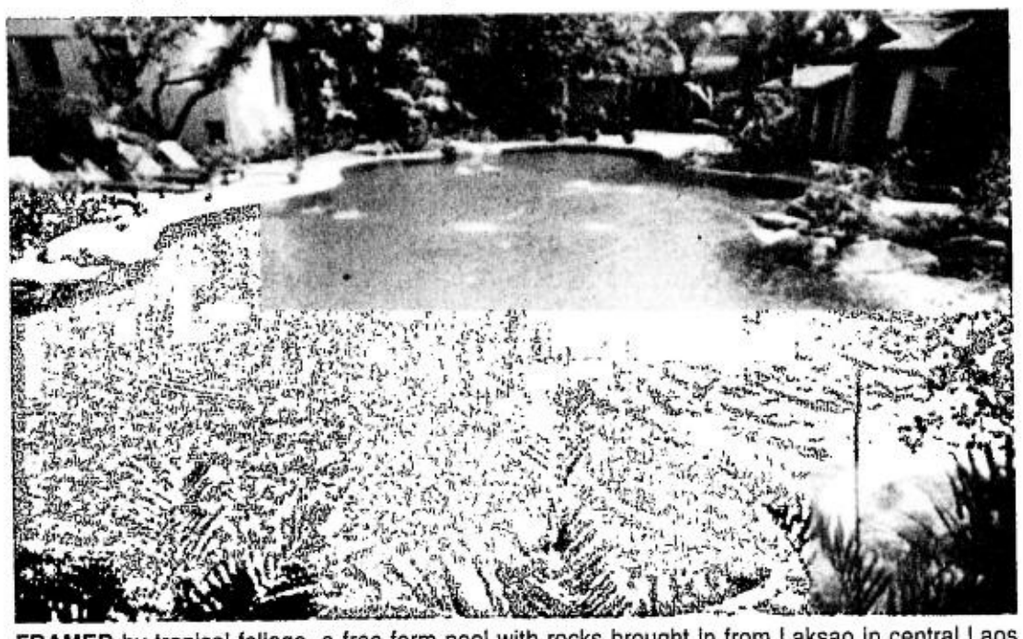
BEYOND the lagoon-type pool, tropical palms frame the colonnaded courtyard façade of the palace.

The setting is international. Chairs were sourced from Spain, marble from Sabah, chandeliers from Thailand, bathroom fittings from Australia and glass enclosures from Canada.

Instead of the usual hotel corridor, rooms connect to a long, open verandah shaded by wide roof overhangs. The verandah looks out to the central courtyard, lush with flowering tropical plants around a large, free-form pool in a natural setting. In contrast to the formal hotel façade, the central garden is a tropical oasis with coconut trees, champa flowers and heliconia, where staff, barefoot in the Lao tradition and dressed in splendid Laotian weavings, silently wait in the shadows ready to assist the guests.

Beside the entrance portico leading to the main lobby and underneath the trees that shade Pangkham Street is an outdoor terrace set with tables around a stone fountain, a sidewalk café where Asian specialties are served.

Its ambiance is more of a grand colonial mansion than that of a hotel. Its elegance certainly evokes a stately home. That is what sets the Settha Palace apart from other hotels.



FRAMED by tropical foliage, a free-form pool with rocks brought in from Laksao in central Laos occupies most of the central courtyard.

Body contours featured in Metro

HOW do you make fine, upstanding citizens who are familiar faces to everyone in show biz strip?

Metro's Body Calendar 2001 has Paolo Bediones devilishly handsome sans cape and pitchfork (sans everything actually!). See Paolo turn heads with his bronzed and buffed anatomy like you've never seen him before, but save some of the adoration for the likes of Mark Anthony Fernandez, Bernard Palanca, Diether Ocampo, Carlos Agassi, Lee Robin Salazar and fashion model Christian Vazquez. Oh so yummy!

The men will have something to look forward to as well, when Mylene Dizon, Victoria, Pinky Amador, Assunta de Rossi, Rachel Alejandro and Cecil Tanjutco go naughty for Metro magazine's much anticipated body calendar. Oh so hot!

Photographers threw caution to the wind to bring readers a visual feast, lines, curves and angles. Celebrity models posed and primped to look their finest and leanest, and prepped themselves for the onslaught of attention.

They're all in Metro's Body Calendar 2001, January-February issue.

Put your gloves on before you pick this copy up. It's sizzling hot—guaranteed.

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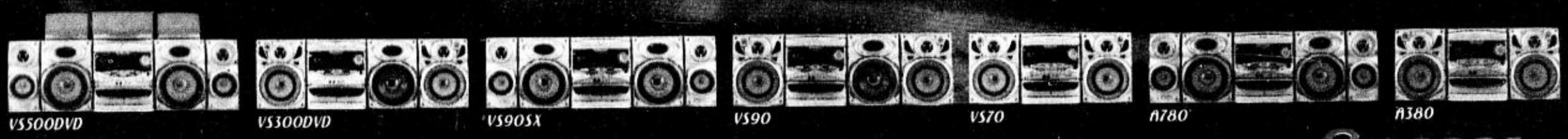

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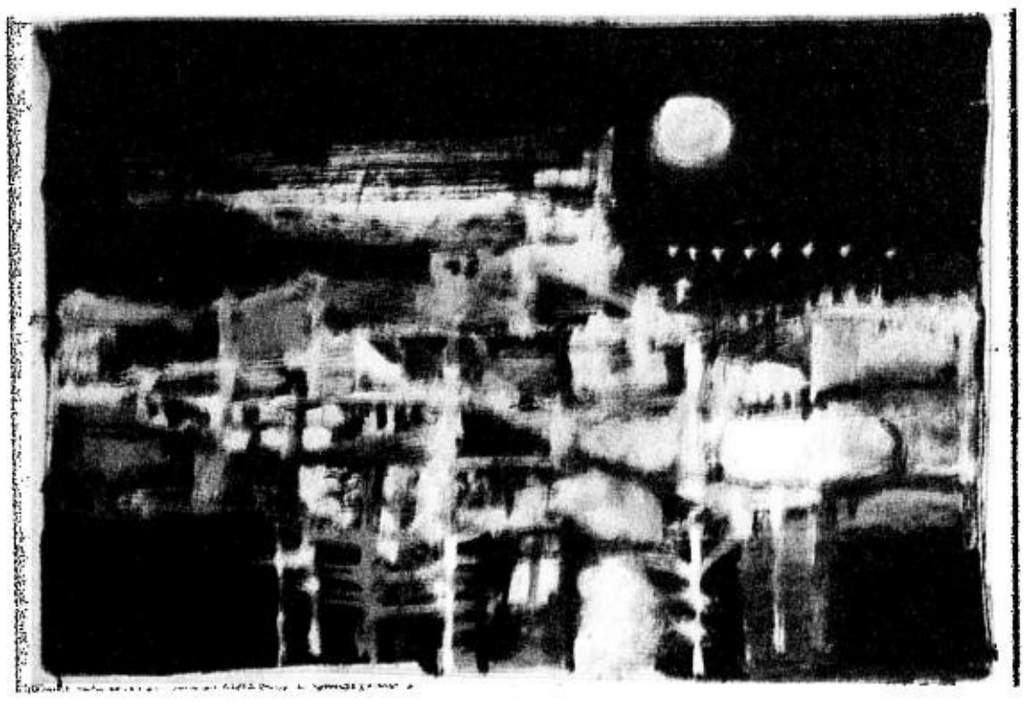
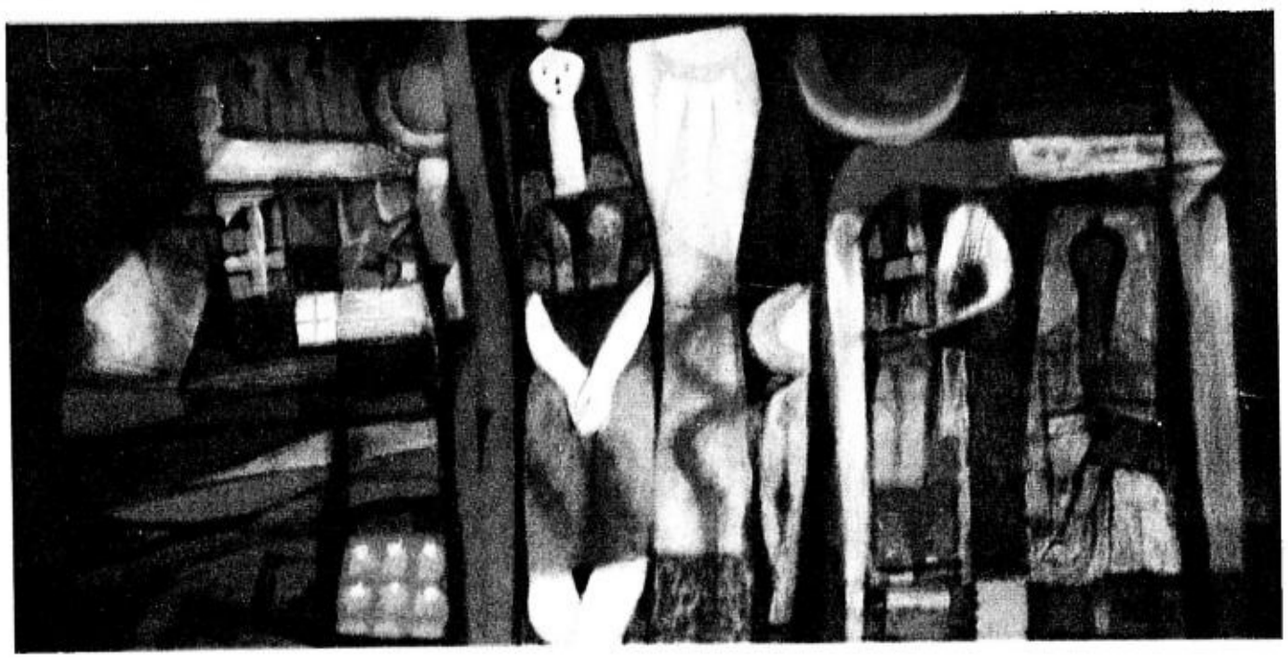


"CITYSCAPE at Night"



"WOMAN Waiting"

Malang gets cozy in 'barong-barong' for birthday exhibit

AS his works would attest, Malang renews his fervor for the *barong-barong* and the Filipino way of life in "Siyudad@Buhay." The exhibit, at the West Gallery (West Avenue, QC) from Jan. 20 to Feb. 5, features Malang's recent oils and selected drawings and sketches.

The *barong-barong* was one of Malang's earliest subjects while growing up and eventually working at areas markedly surrounded by it. Industrialization and the information age have not driven it away. *"Hanggang ngayon, mayroon pa rin,"* observes Malang, now 73, also seeing that vendors now need to work well into the night to make ends meet. He also sees his part exhibit, part retrospective as a fine mix of influences Filipinos got from the Spaniards (thus, the use of the word "*siyudad*") and the Americans (the symbol "@" stands for every American import) and how Filipinos adapted them into a distinct way of life (*"buhay"*).

MALANG turns 73

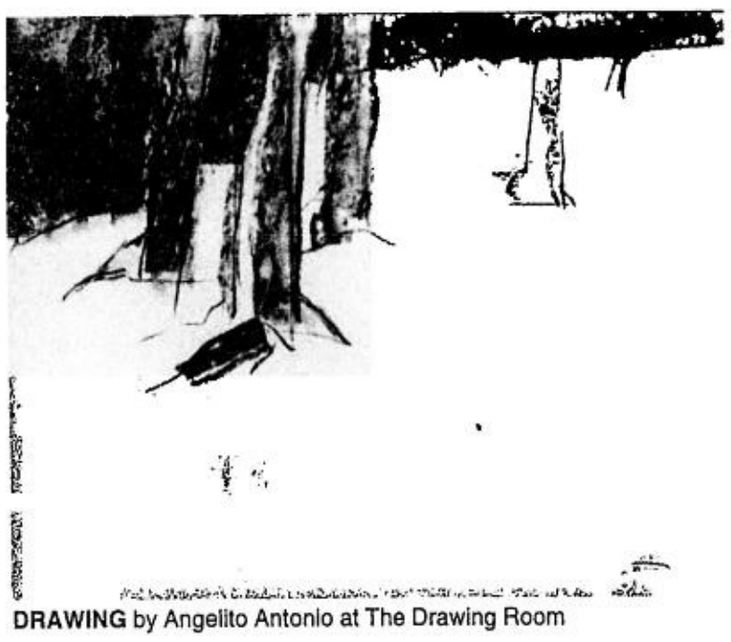
Malang, always known for his colorful renditions, now tries to widen his palette selection, adding violets, blues and greens to his sunny yellows and cheerful reds. He welcomes the transition as stepping into the new century of dot.com ventures everywhere, though never forgetting that a big chunk of the population has no access to computers and has to make do with very little resources. He believes one has to stay in touch with the times by continuously studying, listening, working and praying. That is the reason he sees new things even in his old works, a number of which are also on display.

"Para din 'yang politika, may dagdag-bawas," notes Malang, on adding or removing elements from his past works. At the moment, using oil—a medium he learned to master only a few years ago—excites him the most. He sees painting not as something controlled by "moods" but driven by a lifelong commitment. He always tells his peers that he was no overnight sensation and had to work just as hard to get to where he is now. Just like any product, he adds, your work needs constant quality control. That is exactly what he does, getting up early in the morning, seeking divine inspiration and keeping up with the work ethic he has set for himself and never resting on laurels.

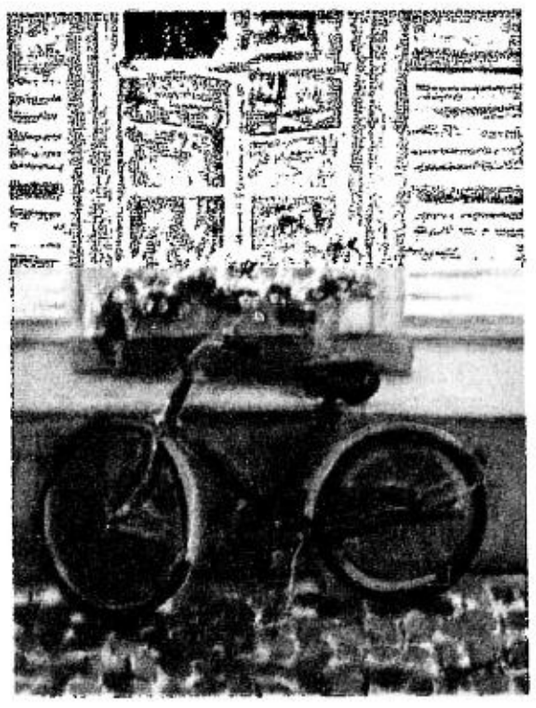
It is no wonder that people, even his critics, continue to patronize his works. Malang says the key is to enjoy what you do. And perhaps you will never run out of ideas to play with, as Malang does. He always has a notebook by his side, on which he records random thoughts and strokes. That keeps you always busy, Malang adds, whose birthday wish is to be given more time to paint and maximize his creative potential.

West Gallery is at Marisan Center, 48 West Avenue, QC. Call 411-0336/9221

Malic at West Gallery; Antonio at the Drawing Room



DRAWING by Angelito Antonio at The Drawing Room



"RED Bicycle, Brugge" by Toots Magsino, on view from Jan. 19-31 at Gallery Nine, 150 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati. Call 899-2704

"ONE" by Felix Bacolor, on view at the West Gallery, SM Megamall until Jan. 23

VISUAL ARTS

MALIC AT THE WEST GALLERY. Jerome Malic aims for a different kind of high in his exhibit "High Tea," his ninth one-man show, at the West Gallery, 3/L Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. The exhibit runs from Jan. 18-30. Cups and saucers, done in oil on canvas as captured from different angles, are featured. Call 752-7028.

ANTONIO AT THE DRAWING ROOM. Angelito Antonio has opened The Drawing Room's year 2001 exhibition program with a suite of landscape drawings reminiscent of his highly successful show of charcoal drawings exhibited last year. Visit the Drawing Room at 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Metrostar Building, Makati City. The exhibit runs until Jan. 31. Call 897-7877/6990.

BACOLOR AT WEST GALLERY. Artist Felix Bacolor mounts his first solo exhibit for the year titled "1-11-01" at the West Gallery, Art Walk, 4/L SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit features two large acrylic paintings and six smaller ones depicting the heavenly sight that is the sky at night. Characterized by specks of light glimmering through dark green backgrounds, Bacolor tries to capture images of constellations as seen in the nighttime sky. The exhibit runs until Jan. 23. Call 634-1284.

'ART OF THE MASTERS' AT GALERIA DE LAS ISLAS. Galeria de las Islas presents an exhibit of Filipino masters, including National Artist in Sculpture Napoleon Abueva, Manuel Rodriguez Sr., known as the Father of Filipino Printmaking, and other highly acclaimed artists, including Lee Aguinaldo, Roberto Chabet, Rodolfo Ragodon, Rene Robles, Manuel Rodriguez Jr. and Solomon Saprid. Dubbed "Art of the Masters," the exhibit is ongoing until Jan. 24. Galeria de las Islas is at the 3/F Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. Call 527-2113.

ANGONO ARTISTS AT SSS GALLERY. The Social Security System holds a month-long exhibit showcasing the works of one of Angono, Rizal's most prominent professional art groups—the Angono Ateliers Association—at the SSS Collection of Arts and Antiques Gallery, SSS Head Office, East Avenue, Diliman, QC. Dubbed "Selebrasyon: Ika-25 Taon ng AAA," it will feature the works of Angono's homegrown talents from the group originally conceptualized by National Artist Carlos "Botong" Francisco. Participating artists include Ember Crisostomo, Rading Caringal, Atoy Apostadero, Resty de Borja, Gerry Bantang, Olan Alcantara, Bobet Andres, Marcelo Capistrano, Charlie Val, Alvin delas Alas, Ambet Lugtu, Misong Matusok, Leo Calaor, Dolpee Alcantara, Dino Blanco, Jon-Jon Santos, Eric Equalada, Maya Magpantay, JR Mercado, Bong Auron, Riovic Acallar, Elmer Lacanaria, Buddy Medina, Peter Morton, Ogie Salmorin, Joel delos Santos, Lirio Ignacio, Benjo Fernando and Gretel Balajadia. The exhibit runs until Feb. 2.

PHOTO EXHIBIT AT THE ALCOVE. The Alcove features Nana Buxani, Raymond Panaligan and Kat Palasi in a group photo exhibit dubbed "Picture Trip: Snapshots from the Road." The exhibit depicts the excitement, awe and bewilderment of three Manila-based photographer-artists as they explore the streets of New York, Pans, Amsterdam, Brussels' Berlin and Cologne. The exhibit opens tomorrow and runs until Jan.31. The Alcove is at the Filipinas Heritage Library on Makati Avenue, Ayala Triangle, Makati City. Call 892-1801 or e-mail events@fillib.org.ph

PEPITO AT GALLERY 5 DAVAO. Gallery 5 of JS Gaisano Citimall, Davao City greets the new year with "Pasundayag," an exhibit of Lito N. Pepito's paintings of Davao's picturesque sights, sounds and diverse people. Impeccably captured on canvases, Pepito's works show his passion not just for still life and portraits, but for the people of Davao. The exhibit runs until Jan. 31 at the 5/L JS Gaisano Citimall, Ilustre Street, Davao City.

BOSE AT GREEN PAPAYA. Santiago Bose opens his exhibit of recent works dubbed "Travelling Bones Gather No Stones" on Jan. 19, 4 p.m., at Green Papaya Art Projects, Unit 304, Sterten Place Condominium, 116 Maginhawa St., Teachers Village East, QC. The collection is a humorous allusion to the restless spirit of adventure and experiment, which spurred the artist to seek new environments and experiences both here and abroad. The exhibit runs until Feb. 14. Call 927-3187 and 926-2096.

SAMONTE AT HEART CENTER. The Philippine Heart Center Art Gallery presents the serigraph series of artist Rodolfo Samonte in the 1970s show titled "Samonte." The exhibit showcases his works from the PHC art collection. This runs until Jan. 27 at the Medical Arts, Philippine Heart Center.

QUERUBIN AT VARGAS MUSEUM. Nelfa Querubin will open her latest exhibit of contemporary studio pottery dubbed "Forms and Textures" at the Lobby of the Vargas Museum, UP Campus, Diliman, QC, on Feb.1 which runs until Feb. 28. Call 920-5301.

Raul Sunico plays for cultural conservation in UST Museum concert

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Museum of Arts and Sciences and the UST Research and Endowment Foundation, Inc. will present pianist Raul Sunico in "Raul Sunico in the Key of C: Conserving the University's Cultural Heritage" on Jan. 19, 7 p.m., at the main exhibition hall of the UST Museum.

Staged in cooperation with the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. and the Philippine Tourism Authority, the concert seeks to raise awareness on the need to conserve the cultural heritage of UST, Asia's oldest university. Toward this, the Cultural Heritage Conservation Trust Fund has been established to raise funds for the conservation work of the UST Museum, the country's oldest museum.

Before the concert starts, UST Rector Fr. Tamerlane Lana, O.P. and UST Museum Director and concurrent College of Fine Arts Dean Fr. Isidro Abano, O.P. will open the exhibit featuring some of the restored items in the UST collection, particularly easel paintings and polychrome wooden structures. The exhibit will run Feb. 16.

SUNICO

Both the concert and the exhibit are the UST Museum's contributions to the 390th anniversary celebration of UST.

The Cultural Heritage Conservation Fund is open to corporate sponsors, patrons (P5,000), sponsors (P2,500) and donors (P1,500). For information about the concert, exhibit and sponsorship, call 781-1815 or 740-9718. Or visit the UST Museum at the UST Main Building, UST campus, Espana, Manila.

MAIN exhibition hall of the UST Museum

Eliminating worries can help us avoid sin

MUSTARD SEED

Joseph Galdon, S.J.

WORRY is a great problem in our world. People always worry. That makes them unhappy and even unholy at times. Life is full of love and it shouldn't be full of worry. If we eliminate worries we will be better people—pleasant companions at home, good friends outside the family and even good associates in the office.

Cutting down worries will save us from a lot of sins and mistakes, too, because many of our sins and errors come from useless worry. Jeremiah says: "Don't worry! Be happy! Your life is full of love! It's good to smile because God and others love you." Smiles do relieve us and others of a lot of worries!

The dictionary says we worry when we fret, when we feel anxiety, undue solicitude, vexation, mental suffering or grief over events in our lives in the past, or which we are afraid will occur in the future. Worry is often an unreasonable agitation of soul and mind.

Excessive and foolish worry is not a good thing. It is always a sign or a symptom of some special weakness of our character. Worry is terrible. Like cancer, it will grow unless we catch it in its early stages and take the proper medication. There are lots of medication—psychological and spiritual cures—that will help us cure our worries.

Psychological cures

The psychologist James Kenny says the best way to cure worries is to flirt. That's a humorous acronym, of course, but it is also a very good piece of psychological advice and it makes a lot of good sense. If you want to stop worrying, you have to flirt! Our young people like that bit of advice. We old guys ought to like it, too, because flirting can be a good psychological help to overcoming worry.

"F" in "flirt" means forgetting the sufferings of our past. Most of our worries are there because of the sad things that happened in the past. "F" also stands for fun. The kids like to play and have fun. That is why they worry less than we do. But our worries will disappear if we have fun in life, too. The psychologists tell us that our work should be fun and not a burden. We ought to do things we enjoy. Golf can be a good cure for worry and so can ballroom dancing. We shouldn't just sit and think about our worries. We ought to have fun and enjoy life.

"L" in Kenny's acronym stands for laughter and smiles. A smile is a quiet emotion. Laughter is a more noisy emotion. But both will help us handle our worries. Dr. Kenny says "I" stands for indulging yourself and doing the things you enjoy. Indulge means enjoy—put joy in self! Instead of worrying, you can curl up with a good book, watch a nice TV movie, or take a hot shower and then go to bed.

"R" stands for relaxation which means physical rest, but also quieting our minds. "Don't worry. *Relaks lang*!" One of the good ways to relax is to remember ("R" is also happy remembrance) the happy events from the past, like the day you went to First Communion, the day you graduated as valedictorian, or the day you got married.

Dr. Kenny also suggests some psycho-physical relaxations for worry. He says you can solve your worries if you take a deep breath when you are worried and imagine you are filling your lungs with peace and love. Then let your breath out slowly. Imagine you are breathing out all your aches and pains and all your tension.

The "T" in "flirt" stands for talking with friends about your worries and your troubles: When you are worried, call your friend on the phone and tell him what you are worried about. Sharing worries with a friend will always help cure our troubles. Dr. Kenny says we are all subject to worries, but we don't have to fall into captivity with them. All we have to do is to remember to flirt and to be good to others in spite of our worries.

Spiritual aid

Those are the psychological helps to cure our worries. It is good to flirt. But it is also good to love. The spiritual aids are also very good cures for worry. Our worries will disappear if we concentrate on the love of God and on the needs of our brothers and sisters and our neighbors.

William James said the basic cure for worry and for fear and anxiety is religious faith. The terrible problem of those who are subject to excessive worry is the lack of spiritual life and the awareness of God's love and relationship in our lives. In theological terms, we have to remember God's providence. That will solve our worries.

Providence is God's love. God loves every human being whom He created. He wants them to be happy and not to worry. He makes no demands of his creatures that are either impossible or too difficult to obey with the help of his grace and love. God permits no suffering to enter our human lives without a reason that will redound to our greater happiness in life and in heaven.

Jesus spoke these beautiful words to us: "I say to you, my sons and daughters, do not worry about your life. Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow, they do not reap or gather grain into barns, yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not more valuable to God than they are? Which of you can add a single inch to your height or more hair to your head by being worried about it? Look at the lilies of the field. They neither toil nor spin, yet not even Solomon in his glory was arrayed like one of those lilies. But if God takes care of the lilies and the grass of the field, which flourishes today but tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more does God take care of you!

"Oh you of little faith! (You worry when you should trust in God!) Therefore do not worry and say: 'What shall we eat? What shall we drink? (Or what shall we buy?) Your father knows you need all those things. Seek first the kingdom of heaven—the love of God and his holiness—and all these things will be given to you besides them. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries of its own. Sufficient for today is the worries we have today."

We certainly ought to do our best to eliminate as many of those worries as we can.

Truth of love

A man was very worried and he said: "Give me a guide and a light unto my feet." And God said to him: "Put your hand in mine and I shall be your friend, your companion and your protector."

Those who are inclined to excessive worry should concentrate on this great truth of love—God is my father. He watches over me with a Father's anxious love. Christ is my brother and my redeemer. He will give me grace and courage to follow him in my worries on the way to the cross. Heaven waits for me, where all earthly worries will disappear, and God will be my happy reward and unspeakable joy.

Our worries will also ease if we do not concentrate on ourselves, but keep our minds fixed on the needs of our neighbors. Jesus' great commandment is the best of all cures for our worries—"Love God with all your heart, all your mind and all your will, and love your brothers and sisters as much as you love yourselves." That will solve all our worries in this life of trouble.

Galdon's new collection of inspirational writings

POPULAR inspirational writer Joseph Galdon, S.J. marks the year 2001 with his latest book, "The Mustard Seed: Millennium." Released by Anvil Publishing, the book will be launched on Jan. 20, 5 p.m., at Powerbooks, Pasay Road, Makati City.

The book is a collection of selected articles front Fr. Galdon's column, The Mustard Seed, that appears regularly in the INQUIRER. The book includes selected essays on parables and wise sayings, fiestas and prayers for the millennium.

Citing the prayer of Jesuit founder St. Ignatius "Day by day, oh dear Lord, three things I pray—to know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly and follow thee more nearly," Father Galdon dedicated his book to "all my brothers and sisters who want to be holier and happier in the millennium that lies ahead of us in this generation."

Father Galdon's essays have been followed by countless readers through the years. One of his avid readers, Dolly T. Dy, says, "Speaking in his very gentle and convincing way, Father Galdon shows his readers how to see God and converse with Him in even the most mundane situations. Father Galdon infects us to see God and to reach out to Him from the most mundane of our day."

Joseph A. Galdon, S.J. is a Jesuit priest who has taught literature and theology at the Ateneo de Manila University for over 30 years. He was ordained by Cardinal Francis Spellman at Fordham University in New York in 1959. He has master's degrees in philosophy (Berchmans College, Cebu), in English (Ateneo de Manila) and in theology (Woodstock College, Maryland). He completed his doctorate in English and comparative literature at Columbia University in New York in 1965. In addition to teaching at the Ateneo, Father Galdon has also held several administrative positions. He has written numerous articles, reviews and publications and is a popular lecturer, workshop director, and preacher and retreat master.

More uplifting stories

THE SEQUELS to the bestseller inspirational book, "Coincidence or Miracle II," and its Filipino translation, "Pagkakataon o Himala," were launched recently in what turned out to be an occasion for inspired story-telling.

Stories were told by some of the writers about their own experiences of God's miracles, among whom were former Senate President Jovito R. Salonga, Metrobank vice chair and former Bankers' Association of the Phils. president Sonny Vistan, Citibank vice president Agnes Mondonedo and Winona Pasimio.

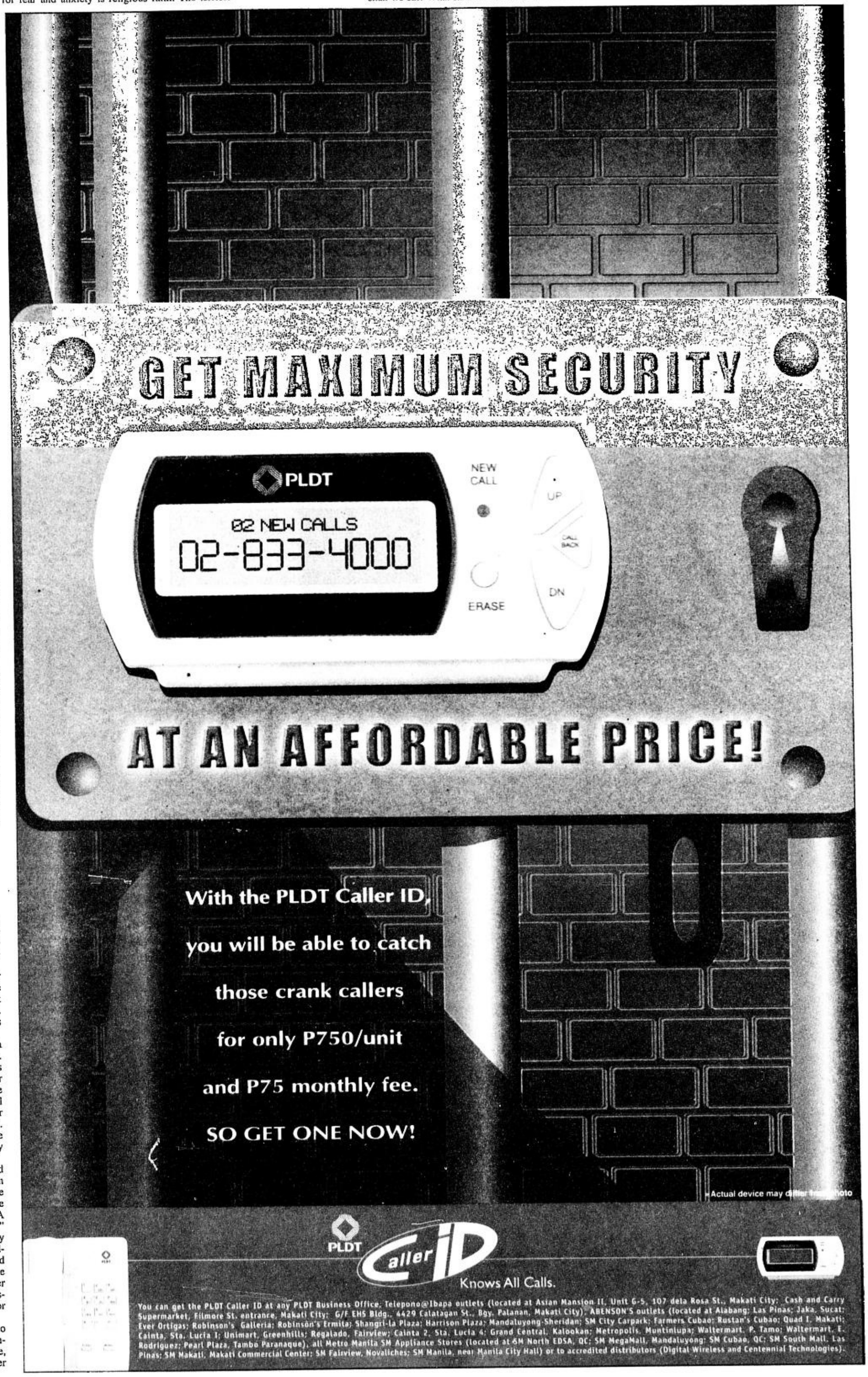
Salonga related how he survived the Plaza Miranda bombing in 1971, which left him without a pulse. Pasimio shared how her mother was run over by a bus whose tire tracks were on her dress yet she didn't suffer any fractured bones. Vistan testified how he was able to stop smoking cold turkey after trying to quit several times unsuccessfully. Mondonedo shared how her retrenchment gave way to the best job she has ever had.

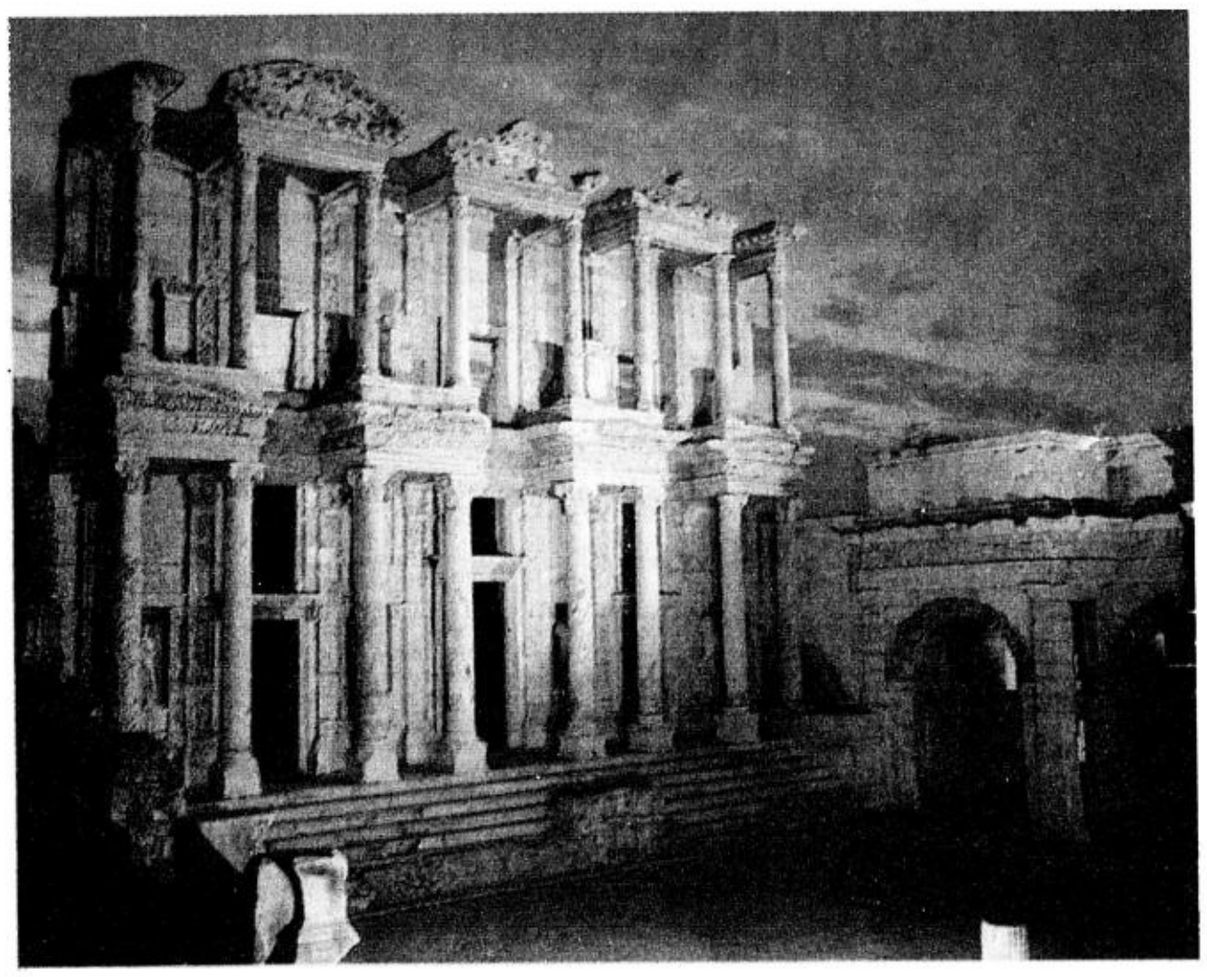
All of them received a special touch from the Lord with their personal experiences which they intimated in the book "Coincidence or Miracle II."

The book is a compilation by Flor Tarriela and Butch Jimenez of 101 true stories by real people from all walks of life. Tarriela is Undersecretary of Finance and former vice president and deputy country corporate officer of Citibank while Jimenez is president of GMA Films, which produced "Jose Rizal" and "Muro-Ami."

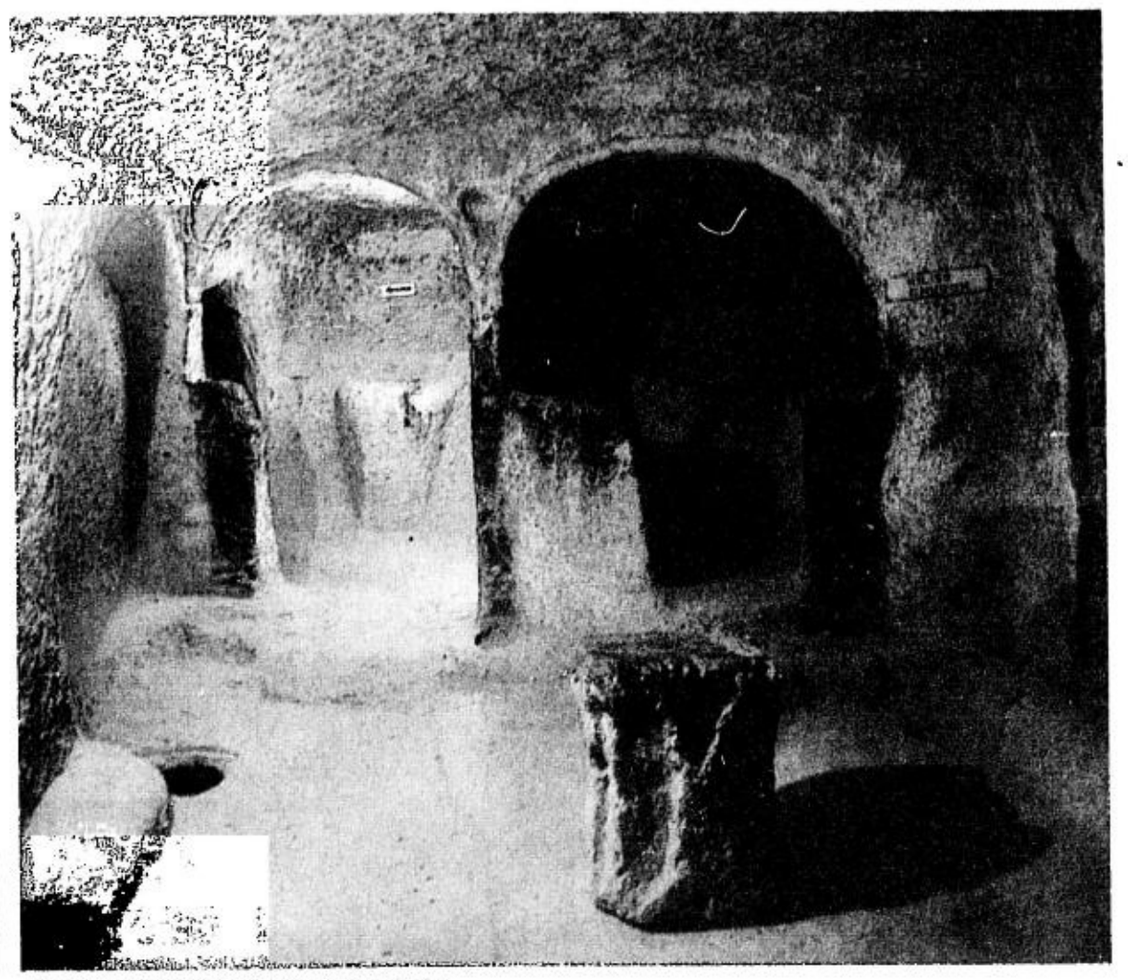
"Coincidence or Miracle II" has a bonus story by Gloria V. de Guzman, a Carlos Palanca literary awardee who translated the book into Filipino. Her blood pressure was stabilized while she was translating the book. The special touch she received changed her health and outlook such that she has offered to translate future sequels of "Coincidence or Miracle" for free for all the blessings she has received.

"Coincidence or Miracle II" and "Pagkakataon o Himala" are published by Conquest for Christ Foundation and are now available at National Book Store, Pilipino Book Store, Bookmark, OMF and other leading bookstores.





THE CELSUS Library in Ephesus



AN UNDERGROUND city in Cappadocia

Savoring the myriad designs of Turkey

THE FRESCO of the Karanlik Church in Goreme, Cappadocia

(From page D8)

with raised relief design.

Other interesting sites are the House of the Virgin Mary, where we had a private Mass celebrated by a Franciscan priest, and the Museum of Ephesus where the remains of its ruins are displayed. It's when you enter through the Magnesia Gate that you will see the State Agora, which is situated near Selcuk. The Temple of Isis is in the center of the Agora and Stoa is placed on the north side of it. The Odeion with a capacity of 1,400 persons is placed behind it and the Prytaneion where the sacred fire used to burn, is on its flank. The Baths of Varius are placed on the east side of Odeion. To the west of the Agora is the Monument of Memmius built in the late Hellenistic period and the fountain of C. Sextilius Pollio built in the year 93 A.D. On the south of the Agora, the fountain of Laecanius Bassus is situated. The Curetes street starts downward from the Temple of Memmius. The Gate of Heracles is placed on this avenue. The Scholastica Baths, built in 4th century A.D., are situated behind the Temple of Hadrian. At the corner formed by the Curetes Street and the Marble Road are the House of Love and the Library of Celsus, which has been recently restored.

One of the awesome buildings of Ephesus is the theater, which has a capacity of 24,000 people. Festivals are celebrated here until today.

THE TOMB of Mevlana, the symbol of Konya

Pamukkale

One of the most interesting places in the world, Pamukkale is famous not only for its entrancing beauty but for its unique geological formations and historical remains. The calcium oxide-rich waters flowing down the southern slope of Caldag located north of the ruins have, over the millennia, built up deposits of white travertine on the plateau thus justifying both the site's ancient name of Hierapolis (Holy City) and its modern one of Pamukkale (Cotton Castle).

Destroyed by an earthquake in 17 B.C., Pamukkale's preliminary excavation and restoration were undertaken by a German team toward the end of the last century. Since 1957, an Italian group of archeologists have taken over its rebuilding.

Walking through the route of the Plateia reminds us that this main street dividing the ancient city was once decorated with colonnades, porticos and important buildings located on either side. The street runs directly toward the city walls passing through a gateway built in Byzantine times atop a fountain.

Antalya

This city was founded on the Pamphylian seacoast around 150 B.C. The first structure we come across in Perge is the ruins of a theater of Hellenistic-Roman type which is capable of accommodating 15,000 people. Constructed in the 2nd century A.D., it is where gladiator fights took place during the late Roman period.

The city walls of Perge were fortified by towers in certain places and the southern part, which is the entrance today, was enlarged in the 6th century and a patio was formed. A gate gives access to a second patio. The monumental fountain dedicated to the memory of Artemis Pergaia and Septimus Severus is seen in the west and an ornamented Propylon belonging to this bath. Then we come to a horseshoe-shaped patio which is accessed by means of a gate belonging to the Hellenistic period which has two towers. An Agora is situated at the east of the Hellenistic gate, the portico with columns is adjacent to it and a church and a bath are located at the south gate. An avenue with marble pillars, which is 300 meters long, extends from the entrance toward the acropolis. This avenue ends with a fountain.

Konya

When one speaks of Konya, the first thing that comes to mind is the Mausoleum of Mevlana, which has become the city's symbol. Mevlana's (founder of the Whirling Dervishes and the Karatay Koran School) father, Bahaeddin Veled, was buried here. A dome was constructed on the spot in 1273. The green dome of the mausoleum was built in 1397.

At the Mausoleum of Mevlana, which has been opened as a museum since 1926, are the exhibit of Mevlana's clothes, musical instruments and books written by hand and fabrics. The Archeological Museum, the Museum of Ethnography, Ataturk's Hause and the Museum of Koyunoglu are other museums in Konya worth visiting.

Cappadocia

Situated within the triangle of Nevsehir, Aksaray and Kayseri, Cappadoçia is bounded by Erciyes in the east and Hasandag in the south. The tough rocks, formed by lava spurted by these two mountains, have kept changing shapes in the course of time.

During the early times of Christianity, people who needed to hide themselves from Arab raids, carved out these tough rocks thus constructing churches and underground cities. The settlements are located in the valleys of Goreme, Ihlara and Soganli. The settlers worshipped in the churches they carved out and developed agriculture to meet their needs. The water sources in the valleys made this region productive.

Goreme, with its churches still intact, has been transformed into an open-air museum. The first ancient structure is the Maidens Monastery, a building of six stories. There's also the Chapel of St. Basil, which is located on the opposite side of the promenade road in the museum. The Church with Apple, planned in the shape of a Greek cross, contains frescos, which feature scenes based on the Bible. Beyond it is the Church of St. Barbara, which describes Pontacrator Christ, Georgios, Theodoros and St. Barbara. The scene of Deisis is displayed on the long wall of the Church of Snake, so are the descriptions of St. Onesimos Georgios. Theodoros, Constantine and Helena. On the rocky mass that heightens from the south of the open-air museum toward the west, there are monasteries grouped together and eight churches, seven dining halls, grave chambers and wine factories.

Missile-shaped fairy chimneys within the Zemi Deresi near these churches, create an interesting scenery.

Turkey's sensual inspirations may awaken the muse of painter, poet, musician or even the lover in you. Simultaneously, you may encounter the full range of blessings its ancient cities proffer: from a closeness to God and the real you to their archeology and folklore galore and human-scale museums. You may also become so absorbed with all these that, when your tour comes to an end, it suddenly hits you that you forgot to miss your kids and your dog.

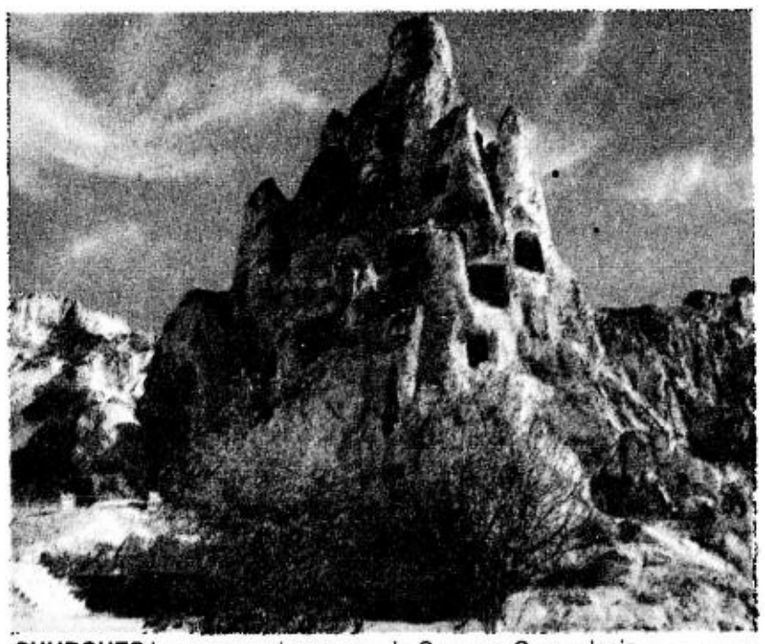
The familiarization tour was sponsored by Far Travel Inc. and Cathay Pacific. Call Far Travel Inc. at 751-1440/1425/1439 or e-mail its general manager, Louise Aubin del Rosario, at far@ skyinet.net

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

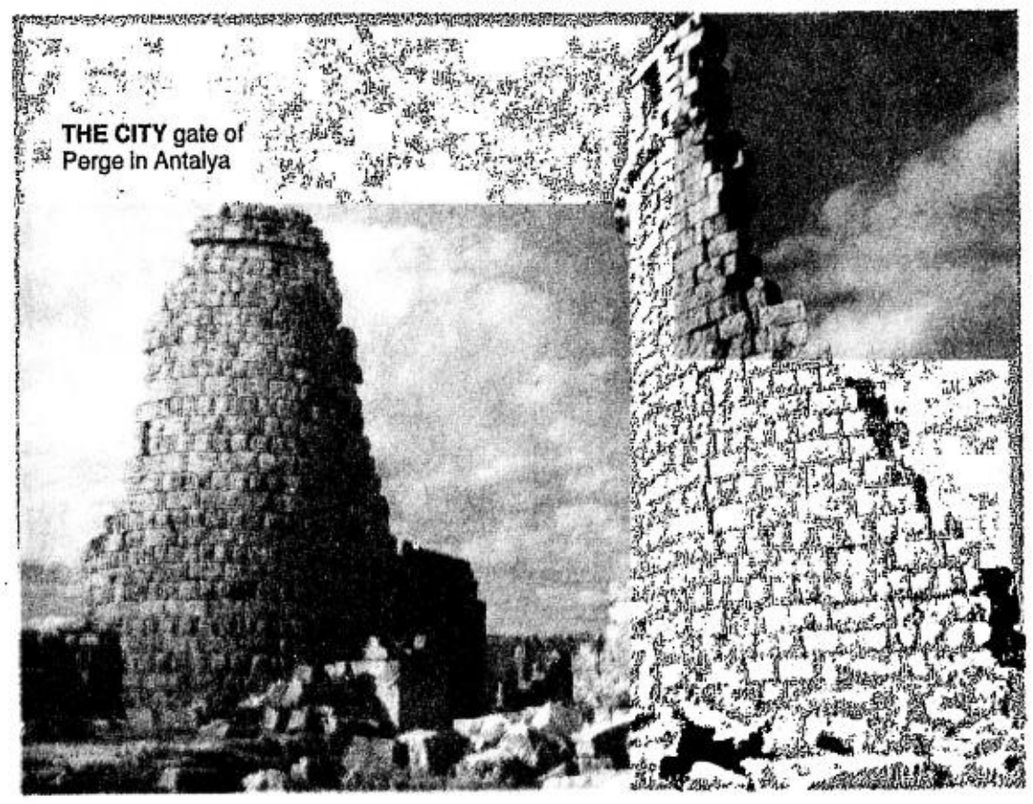
AT THE CHURCH of the Virgin Mary in Ephesus: (standing, from left) Christine Aquino (Executive Travel), Aleja Borla (Grand Holiday Tours), Sonie Otayza (Triple A Travel), Angela del Rosario (Asia International Travel & Tours), Myrna Ong Tee (Cathay Pacific), Shirley Uy (Southeast Asia Tour and Travel), Louise del Rosario (Far Travel Inc.); (seated) the author, Divina Abad (Far Travel Inc.) and Vicky Gonzales (Aviatica Travel) together with the Franciscan priests

THE TOUR group (standing, from left) Angela del Rosario (Asia International Travel & Tours), Sonie Otayza (Triple A Travel), Vicky Gonzales (Aviatica Travel), Shirley Uy (Southeast Asia Tour and Travel), Divina Abad (Far Travel Inc.), Myrna Ong Tee (Cathay Pacific), Aleja Borla (Grand Holiday Tours); (seated) the author and Louise del Rosario (Far Travel Inc.) ham it up against the backdrop of the fairy chimneys in Cappadocia.

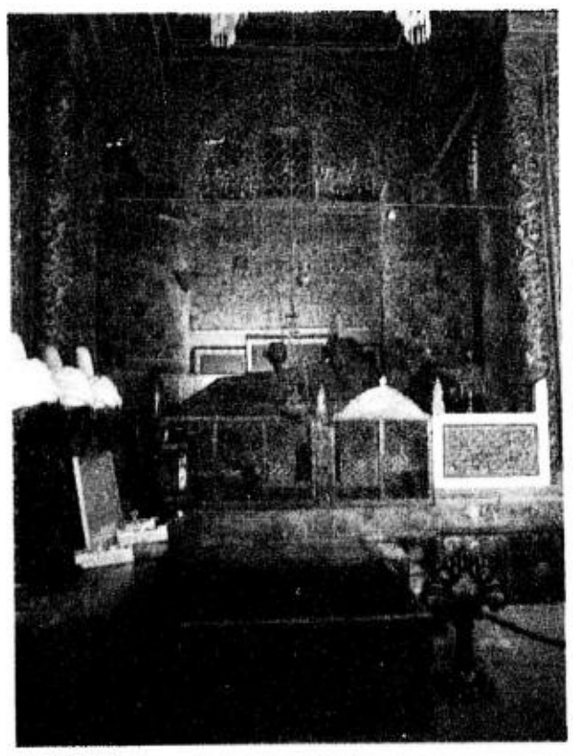
For eight days, we were soaked, buffeted and chilled —also invigorated, charmed and well fed



CHURCHES in an open-air museum in Goreme, Cappadocia



THE CITY gate of Perge in Antalya



THE MAUSOLEUM of Mevlana in Konya, which has been opened as a museum since 1926.

His visits to Lourdes, France helps heal a man's sclerosis

IN FEBRUARY 1999, seven years after a 60-year-old French man was miraculously healed after visits to the Lourdes Shrine in France, the Catholic Church officially announced that his cure has been attributed to the miracle wrought by God through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes.

In a conversation with Bruno Vinuales, owner of St. Sauveur Hotel and other hotels in Lourdes, he said that the man was from a town between La Rochelle and Angouleme in the Charentes region. The man suffered from multiple sclerosis for four years and began to make pilgrimage visits to Lourdes praying for a miracle.

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

After some years of doing this, the distraught man wanted to give up because the cure had not come. He was confined to a wheelchair and needed help even when standing. One day, he asked the one assisting him to bring him back to the hotel because he was feeling very bad.

In the middle of the night, he felt the need to go to the bathroom, but did not want to wake anyone. Suddenly, he felt a strong heat around his chest area. And he immediately got up to go the bathroom.

In the hallway, a volunteer saw him walking and asked him what he was doing. The man told the former that he was going to the bathroom. The volunteer exclaimed, "But you are walking!" It was only then that the sick man realized that he had been cured.

Seven years later, after extensive tests and investigations, the Church declared the man cured through a miracle.

American lady is able to walk

Another miracle story was related to me by Jean Marc Andreo, a director of the Hotel Panorama in Lourdes. He told me that an American lady checked into the St. Sauveur Hotel, a sister hotel of Hotel Panorama, in November 1999. She was brought in a wheelchair. The sick lady was brought by friends to the grotto of Our Lady and to the miraculous spring. After three days, he said, the lady was seen walking by herself.

Year 2001 is Magnificat Year

The Catholic Church in Lourdes has declared the Year 2001 as the Magnificat Year giving honor to the Virgin Mary through liturgical activities beginning Feb. 2-12 marking the apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes to Bernadette Soubirous.

On April 16-21, 5,000 handicapped children are expected to visit Lourdes; Sept. 17-24—pilgrims from the USA will also visit; Oct. 2-30—pilgrims from USA, South America and Asia will fly over to celebrate the feast of the Holy Rosary.

On Nov. 3-9, there will be an Assembly of Bishops to mark the centennial of the Basilica of the Holy Rosary, and on Dec. 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception. Five thousand pilgrims are expected.

www.lourdesdirect.com

The owners of St. Sauveur Hotel, La Solitude, Hotel Panorama and Gallia Londres have created a website that will make getting holy water from Lourdes and other gift items easier. The container of the water is paid for, but the water is free. Orders for rosaries, statues, frames, dried flowers, candles can be made by visiting www.lourdesdirect.com or faxing +33(0)0562943652. The items can be paid by credit card and are sent by airfreight.

Answered prayers in Lourdes

My last visit to Lourdes was in November 1997 when I was invited to join some travel agents to go on a Marian pilgrimage that included Fatima in Portugal and La Salette in Paray Le Monial. The trip was organized by Tac Tours and Air France. Our chaplain then was Fr. Gene Castañeda.

Friends of mine gave me slips of paper to drop inside the petition box beneath the statue of the Virgin in the grotto. Up to this date, the prayers were all answered including my own prayer for healing from a severe cough that lasted for three years.

The cough was later traced by Dr. Erwin Carabeo, internal medicine specialist, to an enlargement of the heart that was causing water to reach my lungs.

So I suffered from edema in the legs, feet and stomach. A timely check-up in January 2000 provided me with five kinds of medicine that made me finally well. The doctor also placed me on a low-fat, low-salt and low-calorie diet. I am healthier now and feel better.

St. Bernadette in Nevers

In 1987, fashion designer/columnist Ali Rich Garcia visited the chapel of St. Bernadette Soubirous in Nevers after several days in Paris. The incorruptible body of the saint is placed in a glass coffin and is lit by several candles surrounding it.

Ali knelt there and prayed: "Oh, St. Bernadette, how beautiful you are!" Suddenly, light from the candles suddenly flickered strongly as if in response to Ali's praise.

If he had his way, Ali would like to go back there again. The feast of St. Bernadette, by the way, is on Feb. 18.

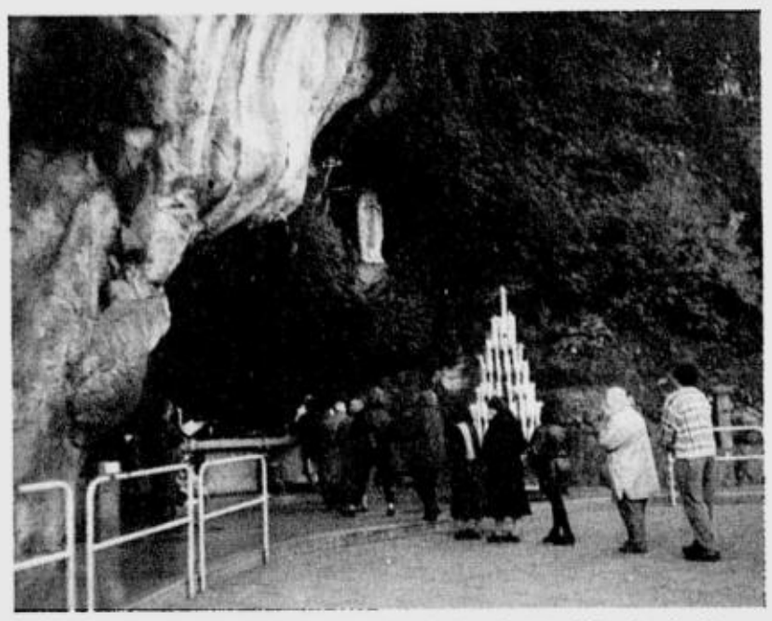
Lourdes via Holy Land

This early, Arpex Travel is organizing a trip to the Holy Land on April 7-15 after which pilgrims can choose to either proceed to Paris and make the trip to Lourdes or go back to Manila. It is the name of the Canticle of the Virgin during the Visitation to her cousin Elizabeth, the trip becomes more significant especially this Magnificat Year. If I am blessed to go, it would be a thanksgiving pilgrimage for me. Call Arpex at 525-3883 or 525-3902.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church is 50 years old

On Feb. 11, 1951 the image of Our Lady of Lourdes was transferred from the Sta. Teresita Chapel on Mayon Street to the newly built church on Retiro Street in Quezon City. This would later become the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The church marks its Diamond Jubilee on Feb. 2-12 with a novena on Feb. 2-10 at 5:30 p.m., High Mass on Feb. 11 at 12 nn and a healing Mass on Feb. 10 at 5 p.m. by Bishop Cariño. A Marian exhibit will be held from Feb. 3-12 titled "Yo Soy Inmaculada Concepcion."



FILIPINOS line up for Holy Communion in the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes.

PILGRIMS with Fr. Gene Castañeda (front) before the Basilica of the Holy Rosary in Lourdes, France

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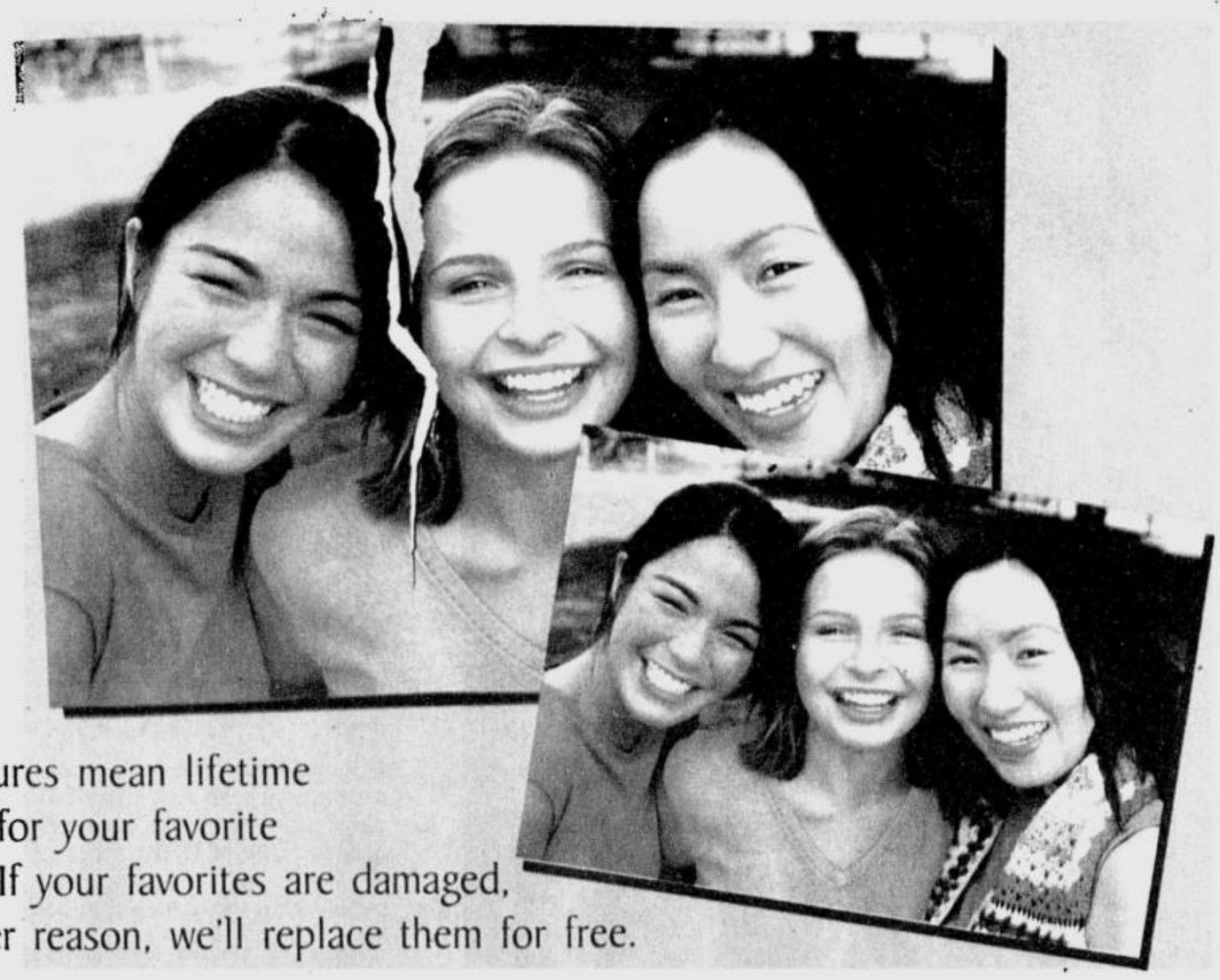

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*Initially available in Metro Manila

TRACES of Hierapolis' (ancient name of Pamukkale) original theater

Savoring the myriad designs of Turkey

BY ROWENA C. BURGOS

FORGET your Louis Vuitton luggage and your Naturalizer shoes. This is not the place where your added values will ever count. You'd better take a Canon Ixus and the right company with you. If you're already in love, the feelings may deepen. If you're not, beware; the ancient cities of Turkey may nudge you in that direction. It's like the man you were driven crazy with but the reason for it still puzzles you. Was it the body or the soul that drew you?

It may be the first time you will see such naivete artistry in almost everything that surrounds you. And it's evident in the peaceful and beautiful villages of Kusadasi, Pamukkale, Antalya, Konya and Cappadocia, in the character of the local populace, the appetizing freshness of the food and above all, in the drama of the magnificent landscape.

The topography and ethos of Kusadasi, Pamukkale, Antalya, Konya and Cappadocia do not invite whirlwind tours. The best way to see these ancient cities is in a leisurely way, a chunk at a time, soaking up atmosphere as much as actually doing or seeing anything.

Most Turkish people depend on tourism, one way or another, to make a living. Yet it is precisely the lack of crowds and commercial clutter that make such cities a sort of paradise.

Most hotels are somewhat rustic with a personal touch and even the few luxury hotels are small enough to have individual character.

Hellenistic and Roman combined

The land of sun and history, Turkey is one of the rare places in the world which have been inhabited ever since the first man was seen on earth. It was the site of the Hellenistic period between the years 330 and 30 B.C. It was during this period that the kingdom of Pergamum developed and became more powerful. Many works of art created during the Hellenistic period were inspired by the Pergamum style. It was also furnished with magnificent structures during the Roman period. The structures of the Hellenistic and Roman periods are seen in an intermingled manner in antique cities.

The most important works of art belonging to the Eastern Roman Empire called Byzantium are the magnificent works in Istanbul such as the Hagia Sophia, Chora and Hagia Irene. In these mosques, visitors can find exquisitely beautiful Byzantine mosaics.

In many ruins, the works of art belonging to the Byzantine period are seen to have succeeded the creations belonging to the Roman period. Magnificent stone doors, caravansaries and mosques have also survived to this day. The most famous ones are the Buruciye in Sivas, the Medresse with double minarets in Erzurum, the Medresse with fine minarets in Konya and the Medresse of Karatay Saib Ata.

Kusadasi

Although the history of Kusadasi, which means Bird Island, is quite old, the only trace of early settlement today is a section of a cyclopean wall. The old buildings worth examining are the Kaleici mosque, built in 1618 and the Ottoman caravansary built in the same year. The latter has been restored and is now used as a hotel.

One of its famous sites, Ephesus, maintained its importance during the period of Christianity. The apostle St. Paul arrived here during the years of 50 A.D. It was here where St. John was buried on the hill of Ayasuluk at the beginning of the 2nd century.

The Temple of Artemis is also one of the places to visit in Ephesus beside the Church of St. John. Built during the archaic period when Alexander the Great was born, the temple is now one of the seven wonders of the world. It has 127 columns, the bases of which are ornamented

SAVORING/ p.D6

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Filipino actors make it big in Singapore's 'Chang & Eng'

BY CORA LLAMAS

SINGAPORE—Most of them auditioned only for fun, not expecting to be taken in, but soon found themselves rubbing elbows with colleagues from other countries, being directed by established international professionals and vowing to make their country proud.

It is the "Miss Saigon" syndrome played all over again. Only this time, it is happening in Singapore. Twelve Filipino actors are playing important parts in "Chang & Eng: The Musical," the Singapore Action Theater's celebrated theatrical piece about the Siamese twins who took America by storm in the 1800s. The newest version of Singapore's most popular original musical opened at the Kallang Theater on Jan. 4 and will run up to Jan. 21.

FILIPINO-AUSTRALIAN R.J. Rosales shines as one-half of the world-famous Siamese Twins.

Roy Rolloda faces the greatest challenge. The biggest role the ex-commodities trader has played in Manila was the villain in Repertory Children Theater's "Jack and the Beanstalk." He takes over Eng, one of the title characters made popular by Robin Goh, one of Singapore's most popular actors. Playing opposite him is another Pinoy (if Australian-based) actor, R.J. Rosales, who has been making waves as Chang the past couple of years.

Over 200 performers auditioned before director Ekachai Uekrongtham and musical director Ken Low last October in Manila. Talent wasn't the only thing Rolloda had going for him. Uekrongtham picked him because of his close resemblance to and instant rapport with Rosales. The two literally stick together for hours during rehearsals—and chemistry and good vibes are absolute requirements in the production. Rolloda also impressed the two senior artists with his hardworking, teachable attitude.

The creative heads of Action Theater, one of Singapore's most dynamic theater companies, eschewed stardom for sincerity or the willingness to be genuine with one's emotions, even if it meant vulnerability. "I could tell if someone is faking it," Uekrongtham says. "It's very hard to find actors, especially the males, who could open up."

"Chang & Eng" is a sweeping, poignant musical drama about two unique brothers' triumphs against bigotry, oppression and fear. The show carries a message of hope and a lot of heart—and those performing it cannot do with less.

Rolloda is still adjusting to his new status. Playing lead role is more of meeting a challenge than being a celebrity. In his corporate days, he would log out at 5 p.m. sharp to rush to rehearsals as just a member of the ensemble. These days, he's the one (along with another) appearing on centerstage. "That's part of the pressure," he sighs wistfully. "Playing with these guys who are names in Philippine stage."

'Big names'

Those "big names" include Sheila Francisco, last seen as Crustacea in "The Little Mermaid," as the cheerful Midwife of the West who delivers the Twins' kids; composer/actor Lito Villareal who was congratulated no less than by the Singaporean Prime Minister for his gentle, but strong Siamese King; Noel Rayos, Repertory Philippines' regular romantic lead, who cracks a sharp tongue as the King's envoy; Jay Espano, Rayos' counterpart from Tanghalang Pilipino; and Mio Infante, known as the prince of Filipino stage production design.

Other Filipino actors who are now playing Siamese villagers, curious crowd members and

FILIPINO/ p.E2

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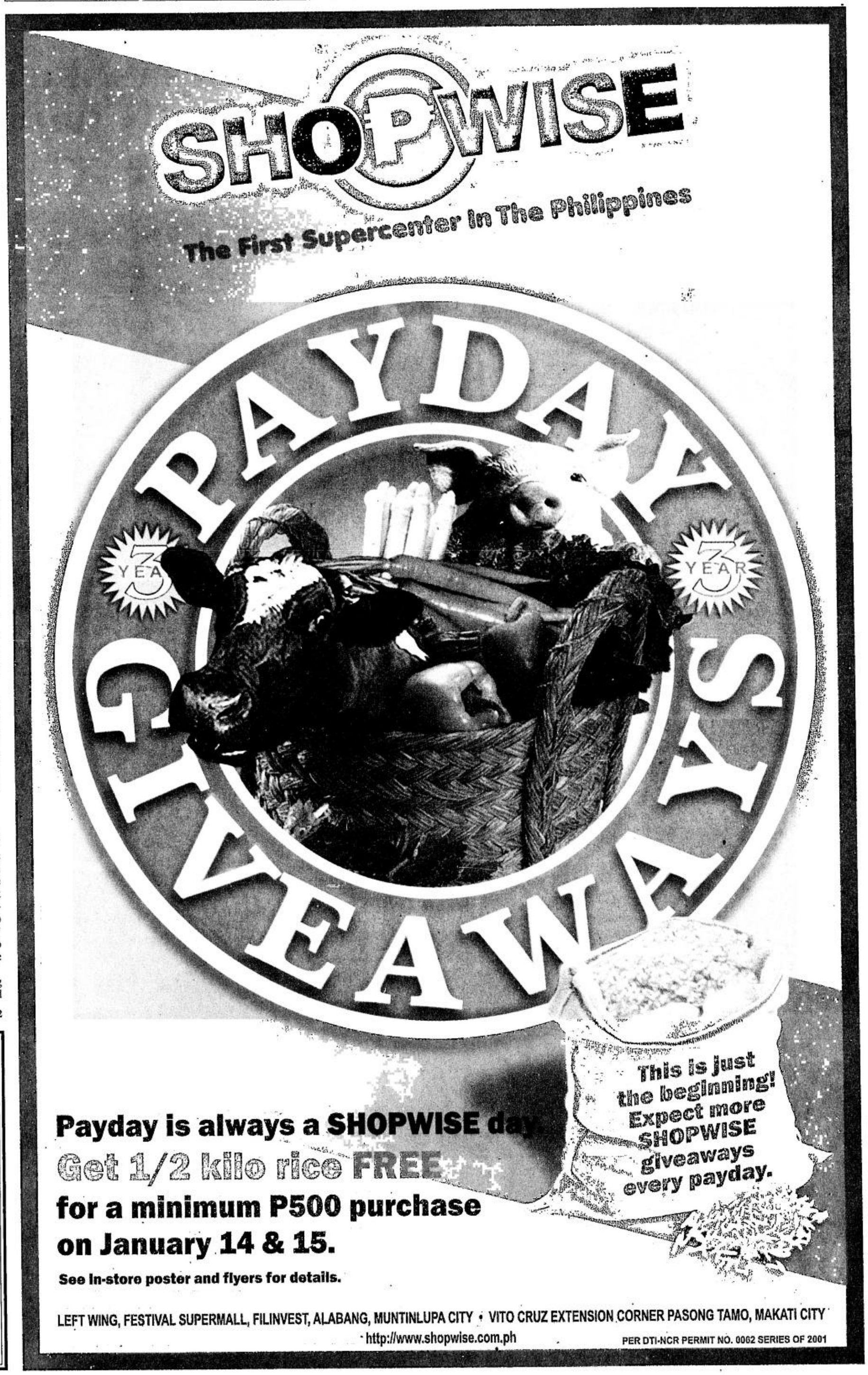
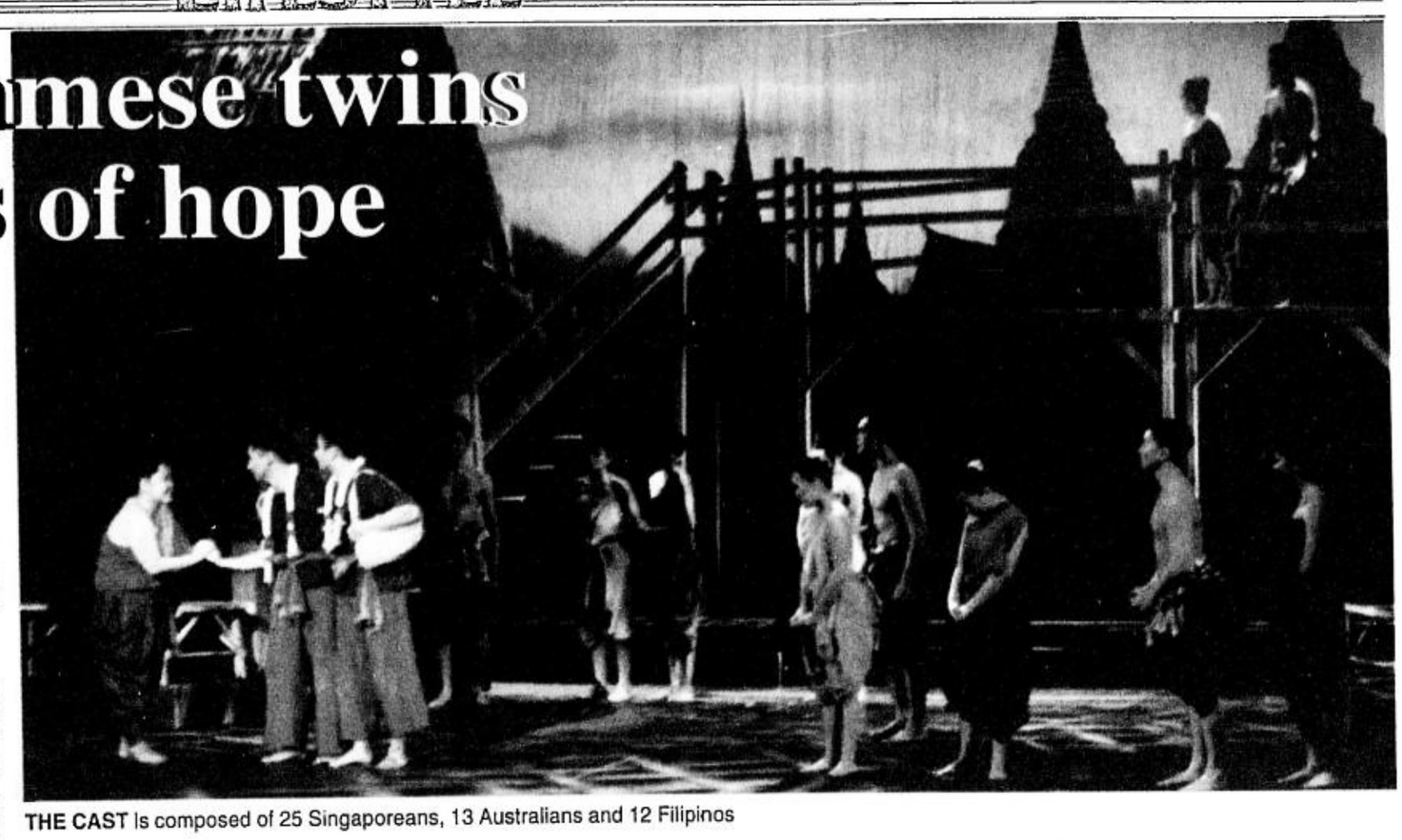


Musical on Siamese twins soars on wings of hope



THE CAST Is composed of 25 Singaporeans, 13 Australians and 12 Filipinos

SINGAPORE—The story of the world-famous Siamese Twins could have been done in a number of ways: a bittersweet drama, a tragedy on the pains of cultural and psychological alienation, or a flat-out comedy capitalizing on joint-at-the-hip jokes or crazy elephant walks.

But in the hands of director/producer Ekachai Uekrongtham, musical director Ken Low and writer Ming Wong, Action Theater's "Chang & Eng: The Musical" becomes a moving, heartwarming tale on how destiny overcomes the difficulties caused by differences.

The play's charms have made it the longest-running homegrown musical in Singapore since its first opening in 1997. The new production, which runs on weeknights (with weekend matinees) at the Kallang Theater up to Jan. 21, has been playing to a full house and critical raves. It boasts of a multiracial 52-strong cast, with 25 Singaporeans, 13 Australians, 12 Filipinos and one Canadian picked from auditions in the region. There are plans to tour the musical in some Asian countries, then perhaps test the waters in the United States.

REVIEW

It could have been a bittersweet story or a flat-out slapstick, but 'Chang & Eng' chooses to be an optimistic take on the shaping force of destiny

American dream

It seems a proper path. The Siamese Twins found success, family and a home in America, a tough enough task in the 1800s. After shaking off their exploitative American manager, the two handled their own touring exhibition, attracting the curious and the cultured alike. Fighting off racism and prejudice, Chang and Eng married Adelaide and Sarah Yates, the loveliest and wealthiest ladies in North Carolina, fathering 21 children between them. Only the Civil War, which cost them their slaves and possessions, ruined them. At the age of 58, the Twins were forced to parade themselves again as "Prime Exhibits."

The beauty of this musical lies in its optimism, gentle and soothing one moment, breaking out into riotous joy the next. While the persecution that the Twins face never really disappears—as boys, they are almost killed by their scared Siamese neighbors—the sense of hope perks up the play into one grand adventure.

Surprisingly, the boisterous Chang (Filipino-Australian actor R.J. Rosales) and his more timid brother Eng (Pinoy performer Roy Rolloda) don't end up (at least until the very end) angry, bitter victims out in a war against the world. They flirt with the swooning girls, have fun with the gawking crowds and seize every moment when it comes.

One of the most applauded numbers, "Mai Phen Rai (Never Mind)," embodies this theme. After the aborted murder attempt, the Twins' mother Nok (Singaporean Selena Tan) sings it to them in encouragement. Without descending to cornball, it says that love, self-acceptance and a good God (or Destiny) will win the day.

Good fortune does greet the Twins at every turn. Enemies become friends and the King of Siam (Filipino Lito Villareal) sends them as ambassadors of goodwill to other countries. Even the cruel Captain Coffin, played with relish by Australian Martin Lane cloaked in devilish red-and-black, gets booted out.

In love

Interestingly, the real heart of the play blossoms in Act Three. Finally, the twins fall in love with, and are loved by, a couple of strong-willed, feisty American lasses (Natalie Bassingthwaighte and Jennifer Elise). The courtship scene is a gem. The lilting strains of romantic piano music, a starry sky and understated but powerful performances by the Twins and their lovers deftly transform in a few seconds the comic to the captivating.

Ironically, the Twins' marriages are tested against the umbilical cord—physical, emotional and relational—that binds them together. Their wives, initially understanding and supportive, eventually crave for a privacy that the brothers' joint selves can never really give. And the choice perpetually creeping into their consciousness for years finally blows out into the open: separate and stand alone, or remain together and endure the consequences. The compromise never really satisfies anyone, including their wives.

The music, choreography (with a little taebo thrown in) and presentation are strongly influenced by the Broadway musical. This is not surprising, given Uekrongtham's background as former director of marketing and operations with Cameron Mackintosh Singapore. But the sensibilities, values, emotional resonance and heart of the play remain Asian: the strong maternal bond, the brotherly love, the respect for king and community, the search for a home, the sense of Destiny.

Like the real-life twins, "Chang & Eng: the Musical" is in a sense a bridge between East and West. The audience reaction on both sides of the globe should prove interesting. Everyone, though, can use the hope that this play radiates in abundance.

For more details about "Chang & Eng," click www.ticketcharge. com.sg/tcevents/changeng.htm

Cora Llamas

Filipino actors make it big in Singapore's 'Chang & Eng'

FILIPINO composer-actor Lito Villareal plays the gentle King of Siam.

(From page E1)

even US plantation owners are Jashzmin S. Alipuddin, Emily Brittanico, Maria Eleanor Mayen Bustamante, Maria Katherine Gonzales and Michelle Kahn.

Two other Pinoy artists play crucial roles offstage. Jaime del Prado, whose choreography gave the Manila productions of "The Baker's Wife" and "Kiss of the Spiderwoman" a larger-than-life gloss, helped create some of the new dance numbers in "Chang & Eng." Weng Lopez brings years of intense production work experience to her present duties as assistant stage manager.

Coming from the various theater companies in Manila, the Pinoy contingent quickly bonded together. It's easy for them to play neighbor, since all their rooms occupy a large part of the sixth floor in Copthorne Orchid. After performances, with adrenaline and spirits still high, they go out to have a good time. Or whip out Pinoy meals in Alipuddin's apartment, otherwise known as the resident *carinderia*.

And together, they can get too boisterous, once prompting a memo from the administrators to just please tone the merrymaking down.

By the excited way they greet any Filipino, it's as if the homeland isn't a mere three hours away by air. The cast admits they still get homesick, especially during the rehearsals last Christmas and New Year. Maybe that's why the Twins' search for their own home touches the greatest chord of all. When the loneliness gets a little too much to bear, they pull out their cell phones to text their friends in Manila.

The New Year bombing was especially tough. Friends and family were hard to reach. And as shots of bloodied bodies slowly trickled in the news channels, it was hard to stay put, not knowing how their loved ones were faring.

Casting coup

Still, they have a job to do, and they know they must do it well. In a way, they have helped raise standards of expectation. Reminiscent of the legendary "Saigon" auditions by the Cameron Mackintosh team in 1989, the creative team from Singapore had gone to Manila last October to look for an Eng, but found the talent pool here too rich as to cast other parts.

Francisco, for example, auditioned just on a lark, knowing that she didn't fit any of the precise audition requirements. But the grins of Ekachai and Low, while she was whipping up a frenzy on the floor, told her something was afoot. Weeks later, she was cast as the hearty mother of all midwives.

At first, the director couldn't believe that Kahn, whose mother is American, was a true-blue Filipino because of her "non-Oriental look." When she delivered several accents, she was given lines as one of the American women.

But what gives the Filipino cast of "Chang & Eng" a fiery sense of mission about their stay in Singapore is rejuvenated patriotism. Nothing raises their pride as Filipinos than rave reviews from audiences who recognize them as such.

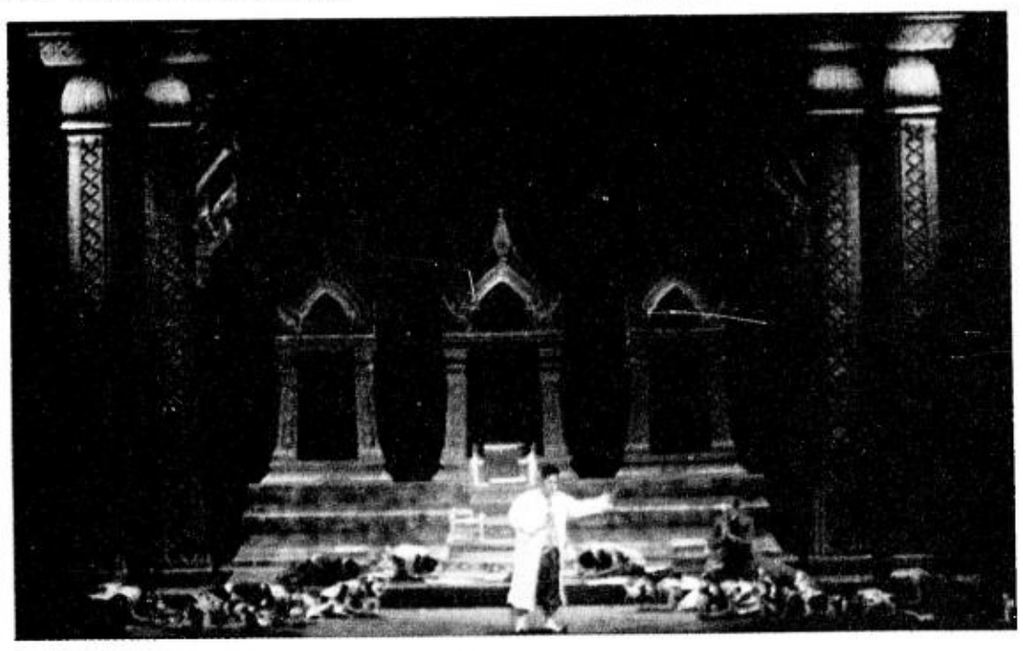
Villareal's Siam King commanded respect from the Singaporean viewers, no mean feat from a people who revere their leaders and who didn't regard the part as minor. The actor still remembers the goose bumps he felt when he read the positive reviews attached to his name and the phrase "the Filipino actor."

"It raises the standards of what being a Filipino performer means," he says.

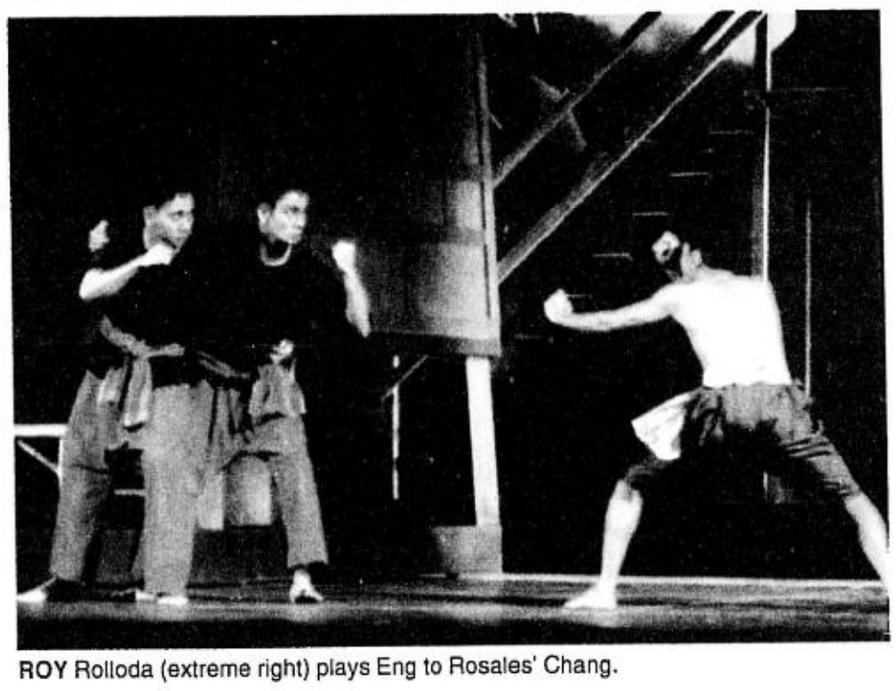
Francisco echoes, "*Narito kami para itaguyod ang aming pagka-*Pilipino."

Their newfound mission comes at a time when international attention is again focused on the Philippines, but for ignoble reasons. Even taxi drivers in Singapore are updated on the news in Manila and ask questions about the impeachment trial of President Estrada for graft and corruption.

These Pinoy actors believe it's high time to use their talents to raise the flag and show a different picture of their nation. Chang and Eng, no strangers to the fight for respect and recognition, would have been proud.



GRAND production at Singapore's Kallang Theater



ROY Rolloda (extreme right) plays Eng to Rosales' Chang.

Rep Showstoppers in 'Celebration III'

YOUNG talents of Repertory Philippines

REP young artists, who have been consistent crowd drawers in their numerous gigs, show their irrepressible talents in Repertory Philippines' 62nd season opener, "Celebration III." An offshoot of the original Rep Showstoppers—a group of Rep actors performing concert style—this group is composed of child and teen actors who have performed in the company's numerous musical productions and have been doing the same concert style performances in the past years. Charlie Barredo, Cara Barredo, Mazie Cajucom, Camille Cabrera, Hans Dimayuga, Chevy Mercado, Eric Mercado, Alex Michelena, Denise Laurel, Timmy Sta. Maria and Doods Atienza show their own lively versions of different show tunes and medleys from various popular musicals in this one-of-a-kind musical patchwork by Repertory Philippines.

A constant hit with the crowd, Rep Shortstoppers have toured with various artists from different theater companies in Philstage-sponsored activities in Subic, Zambales, the Enchanted Kingdom, and in various Metro Manila malls. The group has also been a favorite among socio-civic organizations in their numerous fund-raising shows. Their shows at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall last Dec. 21 and 29 were a resounding success not only with the usual theater enthusiasts but among mallgoers as well.

Directed by theater stalwart Baby Barredo with concept and script by Joy Virata, "Celebration III" opens at the William J. Shaw Theatre, Shangri-La Plaza Mall on Jan. 18 and will run until Feb. 4. It will have its run at the new Carlos P. Romulo Theater in RCBC Plaza in Makati on Feb. 8-18. "Celebration III" features theater veterans Miguel Faustmann, Michael Williams, Jay Glorioso, Rem Zamora, Liesl Batucan, Karla Gutierrez, Carla Guevara, Elver Esquivel, Marisse Santos and a host of other Rep regulars. Choreography is by James and Liesel Laforteza while stage design is by Miguel Faustmann. Baby Barredo designs the costumes. Musical arrangement is by Jojo Malferrari and Man Man Angsico.

Evening shows at 8 every Thursday, Friday and Saturday with 3:30 matinees every Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are priced at P350 for the orchestra and P250 for the balcony. Discounts for schools and other groups are available. Also open for special fund-raising performances.

Season tickets are available at the REP Box Office. A season ticket entitles the holder to watch all four plays of the season for only P750. Season tickets for students and faculty members are priced at P500. Call 633-4821 to -25 or e-mail rep@broline.com. Visit www.repertoryphilippines.com.ph.

Korean flutist says flute is equal of violin and piano

BY PABLO A. TARIMAN

KOREAN flutist Hae Won Shin said the flute could express more feelings than other wind instruments. "Nowadays, many flutists play technically difficult pieces which challenge the ability of other instruments such as the violin and piano," she added.

Hae Won Shin, who will make her Philippine debut on Jan. 16 at the Francisco Santiago Hall, said the flute has actually attracted audiences from various age brackets on account of its versatility. "If one can enjoy beautiful melody," the flutist said, "everybody can fall in love with the flute."

She noted there are more women flutists in Korea where classical music has a steady following. "Some people learn the flute as a hobby, but most of them are serious musicians."

A student of legendary American flutist Julius Baker, the Korean flutist said that thus far, she had played more Mozart concertos in her solo stint with orchestras from all over the world. "I love the Mozart concertos," she pointed out. "I played the Mozart G Major with the Bolshoi Orchestra and the Flute and Harp Concerto with the Moscow Festival Orchestra. I also played the Mozart D Major Concerto with the Bulgaria Chamber Orchestra."

Actually, a stint with the Korean (South) Symphony Orchestra of New York during her college days led to her becoming a soloist in the Mozart 200 Birthday Festival at the Lincoln Center in New York.

Surprisingly, the flute was only Shin's second instrument. "At 7, I studied the piano until age 12 and turned to the flute at age 13. Actually, I wanted to study voice but then I discovered an attractive instrument called the flute. Playing it is very similar to singing and I love the sound compared to other wind instruments."

The Korean flutist comes from a family of musicians. "My brother is a violinist who graduated from the Juilliard School," she said. "My father also studied the piano but he became a CEO of an insurance company instead."

In her book, there are only three giants in the world of flute—Jean Pierre Rampal from France, James Galway from England and Julius Baker (her teacher) from the United States. Because of them, she said, the number of flute lovers has grown through the years.

But she has a special affection for her American flute teacher. Said she: "First of all, Julius Baker is a great player. He is a genius. At the age of 84, he is still practicing every day. I believe he does know how to make his students a great player. From the old generation of flutist, Mr. Baker is my favorite. I directed his two CDs from his live recordings and nobody can play like that even now. In every performance, he did not make a single mistake. His musical expression as well as the color of his tones cannot be copied by other flutists. He said he always thinks of violin playing to express certain phrases. From the new generation, I like Paula Robinson who has a great sound as well as great technique. Again, she happens to be a student of Mr. Baker."

Among the pieces she will play in Manila tomorrow night, her favorite is Borne-Bizet's "Carmen Fantasy." "It is a most difficult piece and I like it most. I love the opera on which it is based and in every variation I can challenge my technique and musicality."

The complete repertoire of flutist Hae Won Shin includes Bach's Sonata in E Flat Major, Poulenc sonata for Flute and Piano, Doppler's "Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise" and Rimsky Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumble Bee." Call 815-2651

HAE Won Shin will perform in a concert presented by the National Philharmonic Society.

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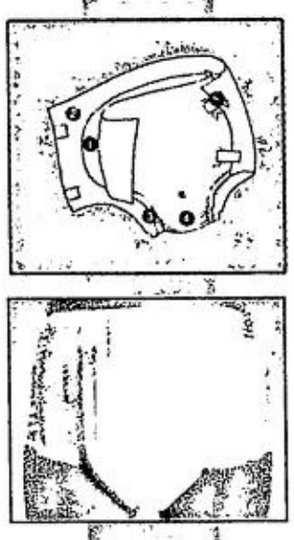

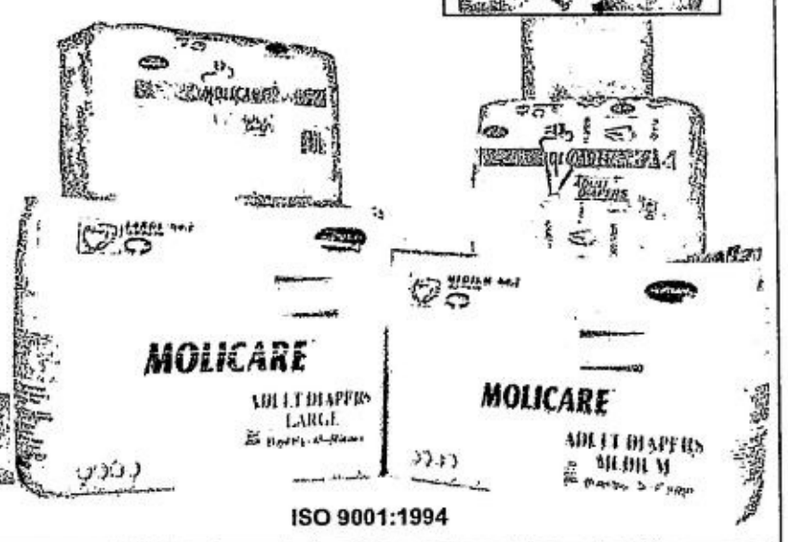

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Actor's Actors comedy presents intense and quirky women

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA

FOR ITS initial offering this year, Actor's Actors scores a casting coup by bringing together three of the country's best singers in one production. Too bad, though, since the theater company led by actor-director Bart Guingona won't be doing a musical.

Cris Villonco, Rachel Alejandro and real-life beau Lee Robin Salazar topbill "Five Women Wearing the Same Dress." The Broadway comedy written by Allan Ball, who also wrote the award-winning script of "American Beauty," begins its limited run on Jan. 19, at the GSIS Theater.

The production also stars Lara Fabregas, Miren Alvarez and Dindi Gallardo in her theatrical debut.

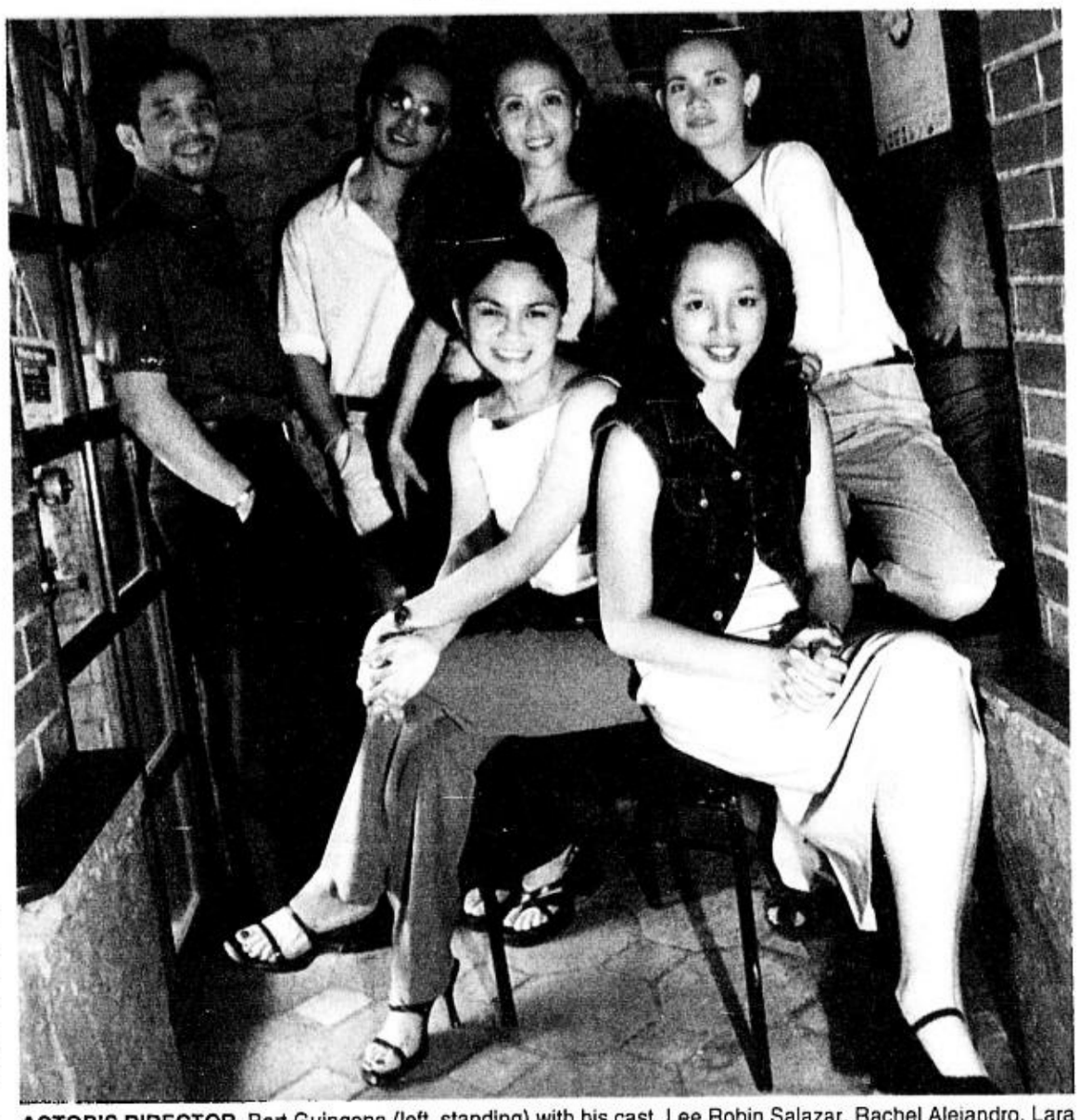
"It's an ideal chance for the three singers to showcase their versatility," says Guingona, who also directs the play.

It will be interesting to see how they will fare beside more established names such as Fabregas and Alvarez. Of course, Gallardo is no acting lightweight either. The former beauty queen, who was absent during the production's recent press conference, has starred in several movies and TV shows.

The five play bridesmaids to a beautiful, well-heeled bride everybody loves to hate. They share nothing in common except for their dislike of the bride and the identical dresses they wear on the wedding day. As each try to avoid the party downstairs, they soon find themselves in the same room.

Five totally different women holed up in one area? The occasion turns into a gabfest that elicits hilarious and poignant moments. So much so that at the end of the reception, they eventually find themselves bonding with one another before going their separate ways.

Now more than ever, they've found new meaning in their struggles to assert themselves in a world that tries to stifle them to conformity and submission.



ACTOR'S DIRECTOR. Bart Guingona (left, standing) with his cast, Lee Robin Salazar, Rachel Alejandro, Lara Fabregas, Miren Alvarez and Cris Villonco PHOTO BY MIKE ALQUINTO

Character-driven

As playboy Tripp Davenport, Salazar's character is naturally drawn to the scent of women. He walks into them and acts as a perfect foil to almost everything they believe and stand for.

"I was afraid of casting him at first," Guingona shares. "I was accustomed to seeing him do dark roles. It was quite a surprise see him doing a 'Hugh Grant.'"

Of course, the production's selling point is the crisp repartee between five beautiful, but totally diverse women. Thanks to Ball's deft handling of the material, each member of the ensemble is given the chance to shine and leave the audience in stitches. This isn't another "Vagina Monologues," Guingona assures.

"The play is character-driven," he says. "The issues are more emotional than physiological. They have nothing to do with the pubic area."

We wonder what people at New Voice, the company which staged the critically acclaimed "Vagina Monologues," would say, but "Five Women" certainly has a lot to do with its characters' individual quirks and values. Despite its hilarious sound bites, the play is for adults only.

The prude Frances played by Villonco is perhaps the flip side to Meredith, the bride's rebellious younger sister played by Fabregas. After having starred in such productions as "Fool for Love" and "La Voix Humaine," playing an intense woman is no longer new to Fabregas.

She was looking forward to doing a light role to what she thought was a mindless comedy. Was she wrong? Although the play is a comedy, Fabregas learns soon enough her character's hang-ups in the thick of rehearsals.

"Not another screwed-up woman!" she says in mock horror.

Profanities

In her attempts to be different from her oh-so-perfect sister, Meredith does the opposite. She spouts profanities and is constantly angry at the world. To think the role was first offered to Villonco, the new millennium's epitome of freshness and innocence. But that's getting ahead of our story.

After having had her share of plum roles, didn't Fabregas consider "Five Women" a step backward in her promising stage career?

"Oh no!" she asserts. "It's my first time to work with these women, and I'm enjoying every minute of it."

The youngest in the group, Villonco, 17, claims she's anything but sheltered in real life. Still, people would have relished seeing her in an offbeat role. What would her grandmother, MTRCB chief Armida Siguion Reyna, say? In the end, Guingona deemed it wiser to let young Cris tackle the role of Frances.

"Since the character is older than I am," she says, "I need to act more mature. She's a stubborn [person] with high standards. She defends her views, but she doesn't impose them on anyone else."

After doing her fair share of musicals in the past, Rachel was dying to sink her teeth in a full-length play. That's why she didn't pass up the chance when Guingona offered her a part. Never mind if she's playing Mindy, a lesbian that's definitely farfetched from Rachel's real-life persona.

"I really had no idea what I was getting into," she confesses. "I've done musicals before, but this will be the first time I'll be doing a straight play. There's no way I can hide behind a song. I really have to work harder to bring out the character."

Gallardo plays liberated Trisha, a free-spirited soul whose reputation sometimes unjustly precedes her. She readily identified with the character, says Guingona, that she had to fight the impulse to run away from it after reading the script.

Finally, Alvarez breathes life to Georgeanne, the play's resident hopeless romantic. Despite being married, she has yet to outgrow certain notions about love that probably exists only in the mind of the late Barbara Cartland.

"I'm the gullible wife who tries hard to be the bad woman," Alvarez says of her character.

Guingona seems apologetic for having come up with a season-opener that is far from reflecting today's chaotic times. (*Juetengate* was months away, he explains, when they started planning for their future productions.) Well, he doesn't have to.

Considering lust for women have been the root cause of many a man's downfall—we need not go far. Actor's Actor couldn't have come up with a better time to stage a play about, well, what women want.

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Filipino cultural ambassadors reap laurels in Northern Spain

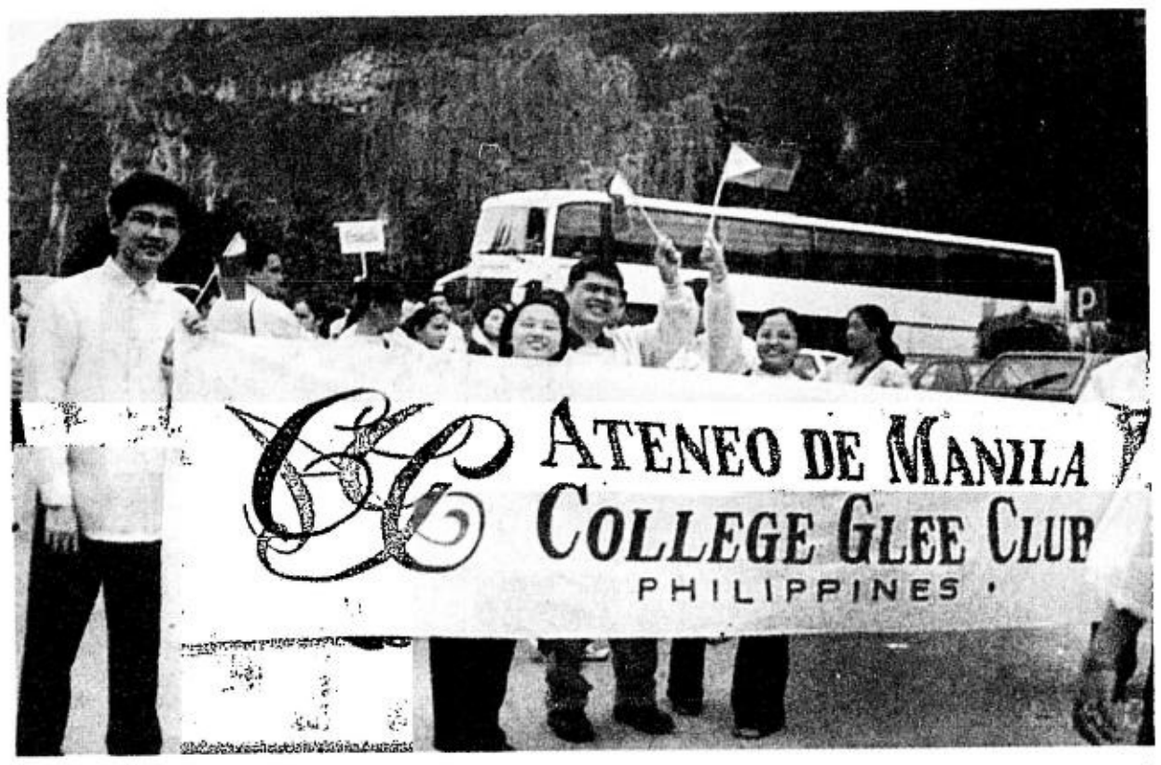
BY TONY D. PÁJARO

EVERY year, a prestigious international choral festival is held in October in Tolosa in the Basque region of Guipuzcoa, Northern Spain. Last October's celebration marked the 32nd edition wherein 26 choral groups representing different countries from four continents took part in the event.

I have been living in San Sebastián, the capital city of Guipuzcoa, for almost 25 years and the first time I saw a Filipino group participate in the Tolosa competition was in 1980. It was the University of the Philippines' Saringhimig, composed mostly of young UP students. Youth was not a hindrance for the group since among the awards it won were a first prize in the folklore category and a second prize in poliphony, both in the mixed voices section.

Fifteen long years had to pass before another Filipino ensemble could participate in this prestigious event. In 1995, the University of Santo Tomas Singers wowed audiences with their performance. The awards they garnered included the first prize in folklore mixed voices section and the coveted Gran Premio del Público (Popular choice considering the public votation).

But it was the following year when the much-awaited participation of the University of the Philippines' Madrigal Singers became a reality. The Madrigals were renowned in the European choral circle and the Tourist Center of Tolosa anticipated their coming. According to Andrea Veneración, conductress of the group and a very respected person in Philippine music, the president of the Tolosa Competition, Jose Luís Andueza, had offered them an open invitation to participate whenever it was possible. The Filipino group lived up to expectations and won the major awards—Premio del Público, Premio Gobierno Vasco as well as the Gran Premio Kutxa (the grand prize). The Madrigal Singers also obtained the following prizes—first in folklore mixed voices, second in both poliphony mixed voices and profane music and third in sacred music. The possession of the most important distinction, Gran Premio (Grand Prix) Kutxa, entitled the group to represent Tolosa in the European Choral Cup Competition, which was held the following year in Tours, France, and wherein all the grand prize winners from five of the most important choir festivals in Europe (Tolosa, Tours in France, Maribor in Slovenia, Riva del Garda in Italy and Cork in Ireland) participated. Even in this grand finals, the Madrigals were proclaimed grand prize winners, topping the other four representatives.



THE CHORAL group in Riva del Garda, Italy

In 1997, the UP Los Baños Choral Ensemble led by choirmaster Alfred John de Veyra, himself an ex-Madrigal singer, participated for the first time in an international competition, making their presence in Tolosa symbolic.

In Tolosa

On the occasion of the celebration of three painting exhibits last year, my wife and I visited the Philippines last July and August. We had the opportunity to watch the homecoming concert of the Ateneo de Manila College Glee Club at the UP Abelardo Hall. There, master conductor Joel Navarro announced that the group has been invited to participate in Tolosa.

The Ateneo choir arrived in Tolosa, (which is only about 25 km from my San Sebastián home), on Oct. 25. Expectations were high as prestigious international awards back up the Philippine group. These include prizes in Arezzo, Italy and Cantonigros, Spain, in 1983. During their European tour last year, before coming to Tolosa, the group proved to be a great success in different European competitions, reaping laurels in Maribor (Slovenia), Riva del Garda (Italy), Cork (Ireland) and Tours (France). In Tours, in particular, Ateneo got the first prize in the following categories—Mixed Voices, Free Interpretation, Interpretation of a Contemporary composition, as well as the Public Award and the Grand Prix which entitles them to represent Tours in next year's edition of the European Grand Prix which will take place in Debrezen, Hungary, in August.

In the 32nd edition of the Tolosa Choirfest held last October, the jury was composed of music authorities from all over the globe. After days of tough competition at the Teatro Leidor, the Ateneo Glee Club won first place in the Mixed Voices-Poliphony category, second in Small Ensemble-Profane Music, Small Ensemble-Sacred Music and Mixed Voices-Folklore. It also got the Public Award.

Pleasant surprise

The special guests, Cuban Sextet Vocal Sampling, opened the music festival, performing for the first time in the Basque region and enchanting the crowd with their a cappella, interpreting Latin jazz and emulating the sounds of musical instruments and contemporary salsa orchestra.

My encounter with the Ateneo Glee Club, composed of 11 girls and 11 boys plus the conductor and delegation head Jonathan "Jojo" Velasco, was a pleasant surprise. Jojo, also an ex-Madrigal Singer, was part of the UP Saringhimig that participated in the same competition 20 years back. He confessed that he was only 17 years old at that time. We did not recognize each other anymore.

The Ateneans captured the hearts of spectators. In next year's European Grand Prix they will again encounter the Glier Music College Choir of Ukraine (Grand Prix winner), which will represent Tolosa. The Filipinos will represent Tours. (The all-girl Ukrainian choir was the runner-up when the Madrigal Singers won the major prize four years ago.) This is a kind of world championship, according to Jojo.

Through the Tolosa organizers, the Ateneo Glee Club also held a series of concerts up to early November at the Vera de Bidasoa Cultural Center in Navarre, Corazón de María Parish Church in San Sebastián, Santurtzi Church in Vizcaya and Aranda de Duero Church in Burgos.

Before the choir competition, another important occasion involving Iloilo-born concert pianist Mari Cruz Galatas took place in San Sebastián. Oct. 7 marked the presentation of the Marcelino Galatas Foundation whose main objective is to promote Basque art and culture (poetry, music and visual arts, in particular) in the Philippines and Oceania. Marcelino Galatas, Mari Cruz's grandfather, was a great musician. He was a composer, and a professor at the Music Conservatory of San Sebastián.

I had the opportunity to attend Galatas' latest concert at the San Sebastián Plenary Hall on Nov. 7 where she played Rachmaninoff and Chopin pieces as well as personal compositions such as "Dual Vibrations" (1998) and "Hojas de Amanecer en Urgull" (2000).

During our chance meeting, upon learning that I had exhibited at the Hyatt Regency Manila in 1974 (with good friend Tony Daroy) and last September, she fondly recalled that she had a concert in the same hotel in 1976.

As Dr. Veneracion put it four years ago, the outstanding performance of Philippine cultural personalities makes one proud of being a Filipino.

Concert in memory of Bing Escoda Roxas

IN MEMORY of Bing Escoda Roxas, a concert will be held on Jan. 18, the second anniversary of her passing, at the Equitable-PCI Bank Auditorium, Paseo de Roxas, Makati. The occasion will also launch the Bing and Tony Escoda Foundation that will provide scholarships to promising young artists and journalists.

Bing Escoda Roxas was a prominent supporter of Philippine culture and the arts and president of the Cultural Center of the Philippines from 1986 to 1996. Her brother, Antonio (Tony) Escoda, was an internationally renowned journalist. He was the first Filipino foreign correspondent for the Associated Press and the first Filipino to head the AP Bureau in Manila. In the course of his short but exemplary career, he also worked for the Manila Bulletin, Asiaweek, and the Business Times in Bangkok before dying of cancer in 1981.

THE LATE CCP president

The concert will feature artists such as pianist Naguib Ismail, soprano Rachel Gerodias, mezzo-soprano Nenen Espina, tenor Abdul Candao, guitarists James Peter Namit and Butch Roxas, playing pieces by Strauss, Debussy, Schubert, Defalla and Gluck. Other young artists will also be featured.

Call 899-5544 or 724-5916.

Teenage auditions

STAGES Production Specialists Inc., the sister company of Trumpets, the theater group behind acclaimed hit productions like "Joseph The Dreamer," "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and "Little Mermaid," is on the hunt for teenage boys aged between 15-20 years old, who can sing and dance, to join their boy group. Interested parties must bring their résumé, a minus-one of their audition piece (any pop or R&B song) and a colored 3R photo. Audition will be held at Stageworx, 5/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall on Jan. 20, 2-5 p.m. Call Perky at 818-1111 local 504.

Do you want to join Peta?

THE PHILIPPINE Educational Theater Auction (Peta) will accept applications for membership only until Jan. 18. Aspiring artists may submit their applications to the Peta office at 61 Lantana St., Brgy. Immaculate Conception, Cubao, QC.

Individuals who possess some of the following qualifications are encouraged to apply from 2-8 p.m. daily: 18 years old and above, at least two years in college, have theater background/experience, willing to undergo training on all aspects of theater production, and have passion and time for theater and social development.

Other skills in production management, stage management and/or theater-in-education are also welcome.

Applicants must bring a comprehensive resumé, one 2x2 ID picture and one full shot (3R) photo and should prepare and present a three-minute performance in song, dance or monologue. Qualified applicants will then undergo an audition workshop on Jan. 26-28.

Call Mervin Lee and Nor Domingo of Peta-Membership Committee at 724-9637, 722-6911 and 410-0822 or fax 410-0820 or e-mail peta@drama.com.ph. Visit www.petatheater.org.

Overseas calls before.

9:00 a.m.
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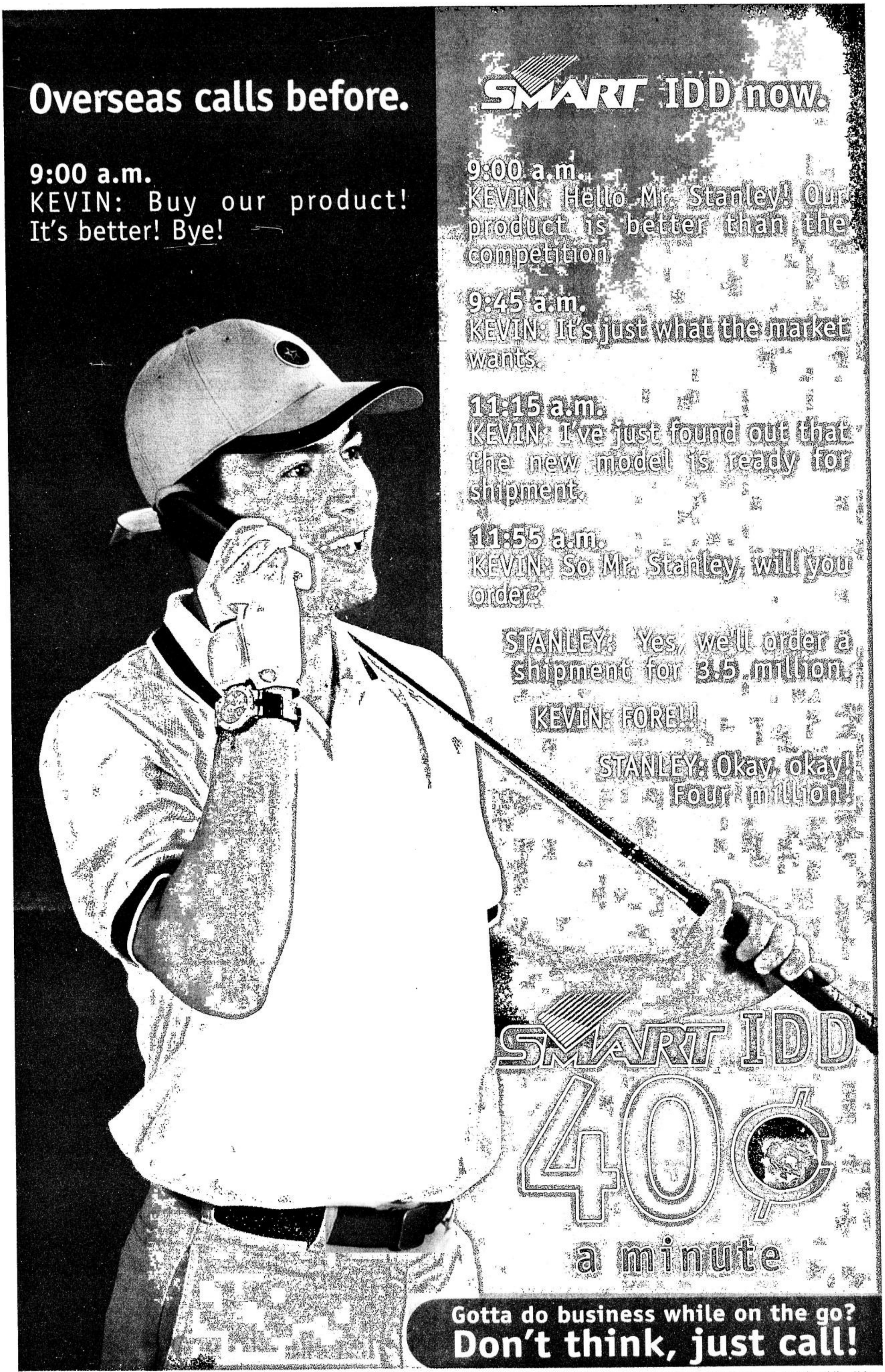
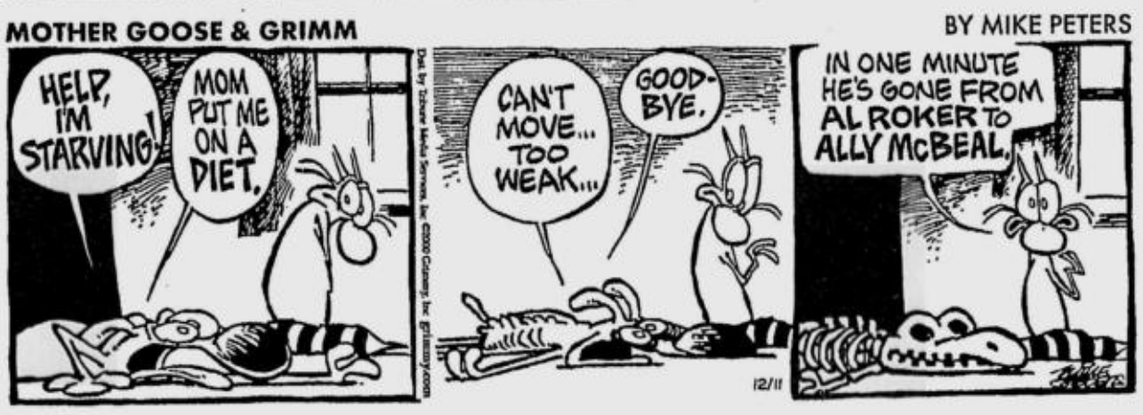


Just dial 00 + Country Code + Area Code + Telephone Number. For SMART GSM celfones only. List of Countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guam, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vatican, Venezuela.

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS



A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY

SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

KATREENA

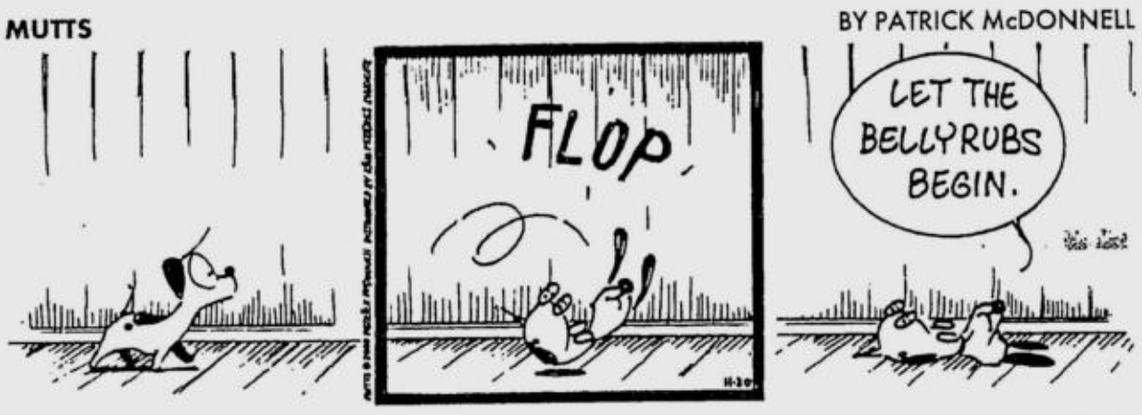
BY JOY CONIENDO

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



HI AND LOIS

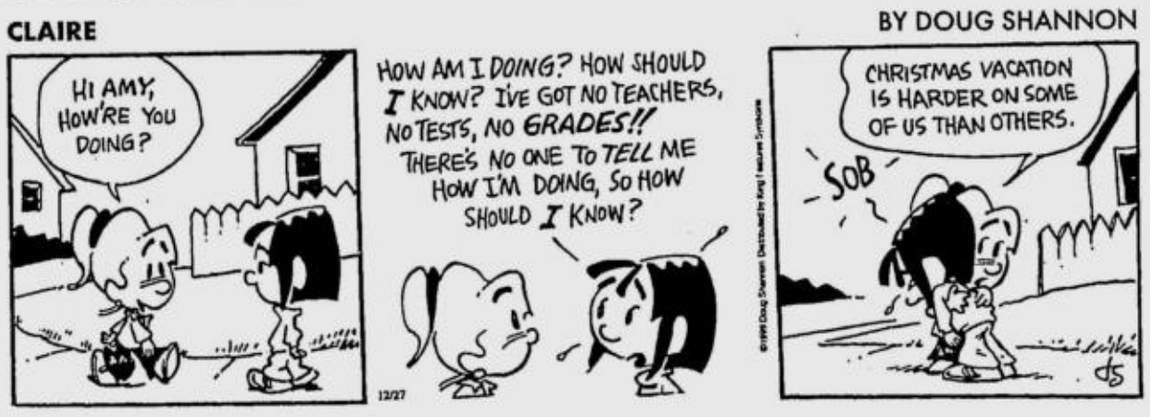
BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON



HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Lloyd Bridges, Margaret O'Brien, Mario Van Peebles, Chuck Berry, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Happy Birthday: You will be headstrong this year. Your aggressive nature will enable you to move forward regardless of any obstacle that comes your way. You are the master of your own destiny and will have no one to blame if things don't turn out according to plan. Romantically, you will attract interesting partners who can contribute to your innovative ideas. Your numbers: 10, 22, 29, 31, 33, 35

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will have a problem with your emotions today. Try not to take comments made by others too literally. You may find yourself angry at the wrong individuals.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Dealing with institutions may be annoying today. It is best to direct your energy into making worthwhile changes on your domestic scene. Activities outside the home will be frustrating.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Children may be a concern today. Try to be honest and fair in your approach. You will be misconstrued if you aren't precise in your speech.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): This will not be the day to confront your boss. Your inability to let go of the past will be a problem. Prepare yourself to accept the inevitable, and it will turn in your favor.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Travel will be fabulous as long as you don't run into conflicts with authority figures. Be sure that your papers are in order if traveling to foreign countries.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You may have a problem with children today if you haven't been paying enough attention to the people they've been spending time with. Don't spend too much on others or entertainment. Get back to basics and emphasize moderation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Partnerships will be anything but dull. Expect others to oppose your ideas, and be willing to negotiate or compromise if necessary to keep the peace.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't let colleagues take over or make you look bad in the eyes of superiors. Rumors may be damaging if you haven't been secretive about your personal life.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Children may play a major role in your activities today. Don't hesitate to volunteer to help out at a school or any other major institution that may require assistance.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): This will be an upsetting day if you allow your mate or those you live with to back you into a corner or make unreasonable demands on your time. Stick up for yourself.

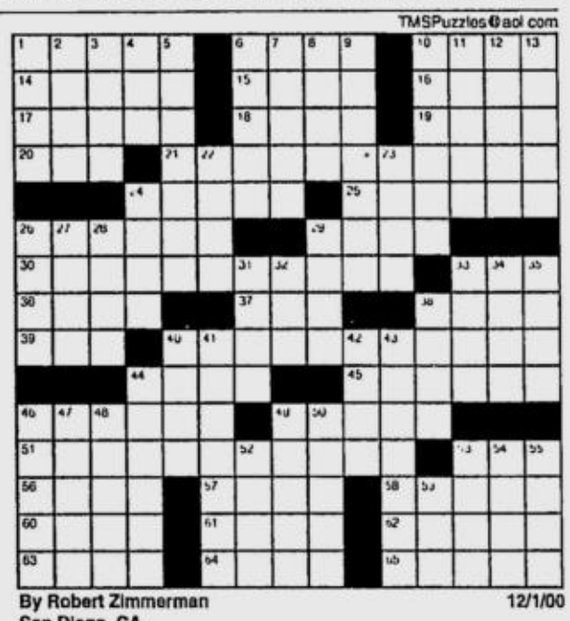
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Get involved in group activities that will lead to romance. Don't let relatives know your intentions. They are not likely to agree with your plans and may even cause setbacks.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You shouldn't even consider spending money or investing in joint ventures today. Lock your cash up in a safe place and sit tight for the time being.

Birthday Baby: You always land on your feet. You are quick to offset whatever is going on around you that might lead to potential upset. You have a knack when it comes to making money and putting it to good use.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



ACROSS
1 Pat down
6 Work hard
10 How sad!
14 Sri __
15 Israeli dance
16 Celeb's ride
17 Top room
18 Becomes mellower
19 Radar signal
20 Brooks or Blanc
21 Parlor exercise?
24 Citrus fruits
25 Pay increases
26 Wacko
29 Exertion
30 Porch-swing posture?
33 Sea of France
36 Make square
37 Edge
38 Rights grp.
39 Unmatched
40 Matte or glossy
44 Hard landing
45 Director Stone
46 Based on fact
49 Makes airtight
51 Toper's eye-opener?
53 Part of TGIF
56 "The __ on the Floss"
57 "Elegy for __"
58 Costume
60 Poker fee
61 Odomes of the NFL
62 One-celled animal
63 Bird abode
64 Highland valley
65 Light measure

DOWN
1 Drumbeat
2 Appraise
3 Part of IBM
4 Go on snow
5 Pueblo doll
6 Dishonor
7 Theater sections
8 Galena and mispickel
9 Of the stomach
10 Even though
11 Cheerful tunes
12 Liturgical vestment
13 Last year's frosh
22 Augury
23 Standing
24 Seneca or Huron
26 Centerward
27 Dweeb
28 Skim along smoothly
29 Dealer's wheels
31 Descent
32 Young louse
33 DLII times II
34 Different
35 German industrial region
38 Black cuckoos
40 Sports action
41 Pre-landing pattern
42 Stable newcomer
43 Against the rules
44 Young hen
46 Madison Ave. guy
47 Capt. Queeg's ship
48 Pinball miscues
49 Connecting rooms
50 "Beverly Hillbillies" star
52 Spoken
53 Listed particular
54 Hollow cylinder
55 Distance between wingtips
59 Big bird from down under

By Robert Zimmerman
San Diego, CA
12/1/00

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

A	S	P	S		S	O	F	A	R		S	H	A	W
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12/1/00

ANTONIO Gonzales and Tony Esteban

XAVIER Loinaz and Tony Olbes

FRENCH Ambassador Gilles Chouraqui and Manny Baldemor

TESSIE Luz and Chit Juter

AMBASSADOR Yoshihiro Ara

Great political impersonations at the French envoy's gig

(From page E8)

able cause for envy. There was Fr. **Gabriel Casal** and **Gigi Montinola** in animated conversation with **Arturo Luz**, **F. Sionil Jose** and **Renaud Fessaguat** of the Alliance Française and so many entertaining people who weren't into politics, thank God.

* * *

It's always a cause for rejoicing when **Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo**'s creative writing class decides to publish a new set of essays. Her original group appears to have expanded to 14 and their essays are collected in the book "Why I Travel." With lovely drawings by **Manny Baldemor**, the book is an intimate collection of travel articles. The ladies are, of course, seasoned travelers "who view the world—and themselves—with curiosity, tolerance and humor, " according to Hidalgo. The ladies include **Nening Manahan**, **Mert Loinaz**, **Henri Santos**, **Maricris Olbes**, **Ellie Esteban**, **Lolita Fansler**, **Rita Ledesma**, **Laling Lim**, **Millete Ocampo** and **Rosarito Agustines**. If you enjoy travel literature, treat yourself to a copy of the book.

At the SRO book launch at the Pen (dear Mila V: can the Pen stop renting out its corridors for receptions?) friends were greeting each other like long-lost relatives. It's a fact of life in these here parts that traffic is so rotten you seldom see your friends. We saw **Antonio Gonzalez** who used to be called Pineapple in his younger and more innocent days; **Lulu Castaneda** with streaks of blue in her hair that she's decided to recolor green and red; **Spic** (a.k.a. known as Xavier, the bank president) **Loinaz**, Mert's better half; **Ces Manalo**; **Nellie Bengzon**; and **Jimmy Laya**. Not only was **Tony Olbes** present to lend wife Maricris moral support, but Cris' parents, the Duartes, were also there. Seen in the crowd were **Lourdes Montinola**, **Sylvia Roces**, **Lorivi Valdez**, Dr. **Mita Pardo de Tavera**, **Peachy Maramba**, **Paz Yuchengco**, **Thelma Gana** and **Chit Suter**.

ODETTE Alcantara, Maan Hontiveros, Ambassador Theo Arnold, Dr. Jaime Laya

BIRGITTA Rosting, Madam Theo Arnold, Khov Sang Ek, Piju Anitola

Back On The Right Track
(Keeping Your Bowel Movement In Check)

The first step in treating constipation is to understand that normal frequency depends on an individual's metabolism and bodily cycle. Each person must determine what is normal. Frequency varies widely, from three bowel movements a day to three a week.

Dulcolax (Bisacodyl), is the proven, reliable way to get your bowel movements back on track. It works directly on the colon to help restore and promote its natural movement. Dulcolax acts within 6-8 hours, allowing you to enjoy your day instead of suffering from that bloated, sluggish feeling you get from being constipated.

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It is believed that in many cases, constipation, or the infrequent passing of hard, dry stools, usually starts in childhood. Fear of passing stools can lead to a lifetime of complications which include anal fissures, hemorrhoids and even colon cancer if it is untreated. Anyone, young or old, who regularly strains on the toilet can develop painful cracks around the rectum. Since fissures bleed, there is often blood in or around the stools.

The first step in treating constipation is to understand that normal frequency depends on an individual's metabolism and bodily cycle. Each person must determine what is normal. Frequency varies widely, from three bowel movements a day to three a week. Most people worry that that they do not move their bowels often enough, but, in fact, regularity and comfort of bowel action are more important than frequency.

For those suffering from constipation, it is important to maintain regular toilet habits to re-establish normal bowel functions. Follow a regular routine based on your own schedule. Try to move your bowel at the same time everyday. The activity of the colon increases after waking up in the morning and after eating, so the urge to move your bowel is usually greatest after breakfast. Get up early in the morning to eat breakfast, exercise and sit on the toilet. This practice will then train your body to follow this pattern, making it a daily ritual.

A major cause for constipation may be attributed to ignoring the urge to move the bowel. Some people delay their bowel movement because they do not want to use toilets outside the home. Others ignore this because of emotional stress or because they are too busy. Children may postpone having bowel movement because of stressful toilet training or because they do not want to interrupt their play. All these delaying mechanisms disrupt the body's natural excretion cycle and may lead to the absence of the desire to move. Promptly obey all urges to have a bowel movement—do not delay or postpone a visit to the bathroom as the urge will disappear. Continuously ignoring this urge will change your normal sensation in the rectum and may lead to chronic constipation.

Squatting is the best position for bowel movement. Elevate your feet on a footstool in front of the toilet or bend forward so that your abdomen rests against your thighs.

Avoid excessive straining. If you feel stool in the rectum but can't expel it, you may find it helpful to apply external pressure by pushing with your hand placed in front of the rectum or just behind it.

Whenever possible, plan in advance for changes in your daily routine. Constipation often occurs during travel, vacation or stressful situations. Take a contact laxative like Dulcolax (Bisacodyl) with you in case you need them.

A contact laxative stimulates the intestinal wall to contract and thus speeds up the elimination of feces. Because the feces spend less time in the intestine, less water is reabsorbed into the blood vessels, which helps keep the feces soft making it easier to expel.

Dulcolax (Bisacodyl), is a contact laxative and is the proven, reliable way to get your bowel movements back on track. It works directly on the colon to help restore and promote its natural movement. Dulcolax acts within 6-8 hours. One tablet taken at bedtime will result to bowel movement the next morning, allowing you to enjoy your day instead of suffering from that bloated, sluggish feeling you get from being constipated.

Dulcolax is trusted by doctors to produce the desired evacuation of the feces without discomfort and without causing straining and its accompanying risk of increasing abdominal pain.

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*FREE Internet hours will be available to all the Internet Cards above that will log-in within Jan. 15 - 31, 2001.
**Effective Jan. 15 to March 15, 2001; all P 200 (8hrs.+8hrs. = 16Free hours), P 300 (13hrs.+ 13hrs.= 26 Free hrs.), & P 500 (20hrs.+20hrs.= 40 Free hrs.) will have the additional hours if used within 1am - 8am.

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NENING Manahan, Henri Santos, Lolita Fansler, Millete Tañada-Ocampo, Wyn-Wyn Ong, Linda Panlilio, Cris Olber, and Ana Pamplona

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

Great political impersonations

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

By Amiga

FRENCH Ambassador **Gilles Chouraqui** has a wonderful recipe for a great dinner: champagne for cocktails, dinner and dessert, good food and convivial company. A recent party at his residence proved there was more to life than nasty people involved in nefarious activities. **Nelson Navarro** came with **Haydee Yorac** and had us in stitches with his imitation of a certain senator's inimitable accent and whiny voice. (By the way the senator claims to have read the works of Shakespeare by age 7). **Maan Hontiveros** decided to torture poor Bro. **Andrew Gonzalez**, the education secretary, with "When are you resigning?" (I second the motion, right?).

Have you heard the latest? Sen. **Loren Legarda** has lost the chairmanship of the Committee on Tourism to Sen. **Ramon Revilla** because she voted for **Franklin Drilon** for the Senate presidency. *Patay kang, bata ka,* although come to think of it tourism was really *patay* anyway.

Virgie Moreno, the last of the Bohemians, together with good friend, **Larry Francia**, is completing a collection of stories, "Ravens in Love," and Dr. **Jaime Laya** has a project with multiawarded sculptor **Ramon Orlina** that should cheer up jaded *culturati*.

Kessara Arnold, wife of Netherlands Ambassador **Theo Arnold**, was her usual glamorous self. Ditto with Laos Ambassador **Sengchanh Soukhaseum** who was with her children. Their svelte figures are justifi-

GREAT/ p.E7

LALING Lim and Nina Yuson

SWISS Ambassador Werner Baumann and Finnish Ambassador Raimo Anatoli

From generation to generation, mothers have trusted TEMPRA* for the relief of their children's fever, headaches, and pains. TEMPRA* has also been the brand most prescribed by doctors. And now, TEMPRA* has a new, friendly flavor that your kids will love. New TEMPRA* Orange When it comes to your kids, rely only on the expert, TEMPRA*

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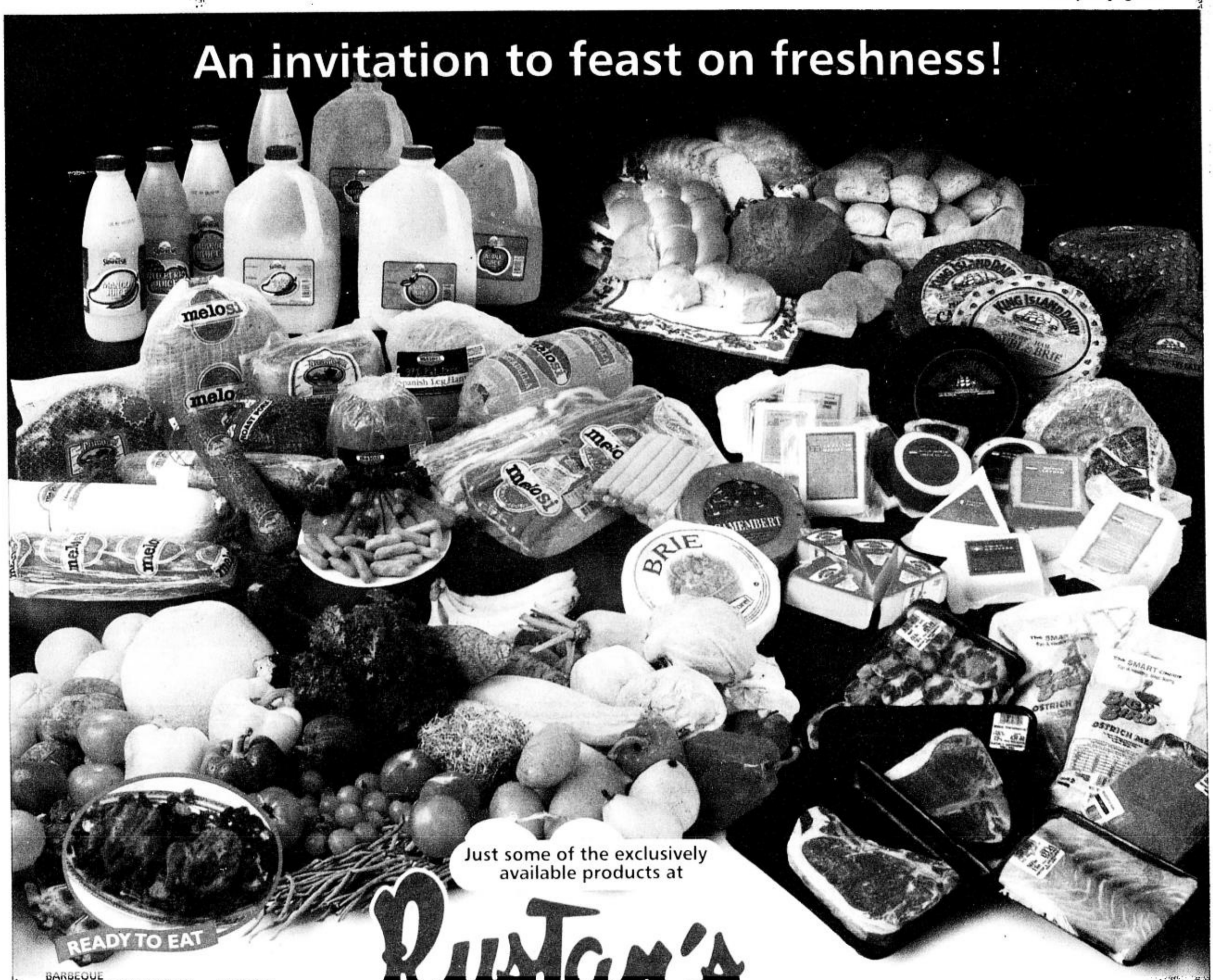
Writer Amina Said: Lost in translation

Story on page F2



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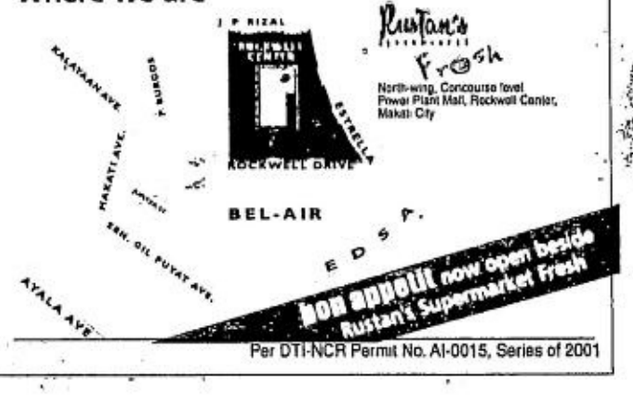


Per DTI-NCR Permit No. AI-0015, Series of 2001

Writer Amina Said: Lost in translation

BY LITO B. ZULUETA

I wish to translate amazement stupor emotion distress fascination serenity anger doubt indignation tenderness and because writing is irrepressible."—**Amina Said**, translated from the French by Pierre Joris

Something is lost in translation," James Merrill wrote. Although he clearly meant the sense of the original meaning, the late American poet of the ouija board would not have precluded the possibility of the translator herself getting lost in a world not her own.

Perhaps that sums up the dilemma of Amina Said, the French translator of F. Sionil Jose, the Philippines' foremost novelist in English. "Sometimes I have the feeling that many of the words I meet are not to be found in any dictionary!" she told a rapt audience at the Center for Creative Writing and Studies of the University of Santo Tomas (UST-CCWS). Words such as *kamote*, *duhat* and even "rice field" and "dike" ("You should come to the Philippines to see what a rice field looks like and see how big our dikes are," Jose had told her.) She was even flabbergasted when Jose referred to the "sled" in one his novels. "How could there have been sled in the Philippines, I thought. Sleds run on snow," she said. Of course, Jose was referring to the bamboo sled, as Said learned later in her intercontinental communication with the fictionist.

AMINA Said and husband Ghislain Ripault (in printed shirt) with Filipino writers at the UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies. From Left, Ramil Gulle, Erli Mendoza, Lourd de Veyra, Ophelia Dimalanta (seated, center) and B.S. Medina.

Now, the Tunisian French Said is in an enviable position to see for herself how sleds run, perhaps ride in one of them pulled by the leisurely carabao, take a close look at the *balete* tree that is Jose's metaphor for the Filipino's streak for socio-cultural suicide, as well as enjoy the sweetness of root crops and taste the bittersweet flavor of *duhat*. In the Philippines since Jan. 7 with her husband, novelist Ghislain Ripault, Said has been touching base with the world of the novelist the translation of whose works she has made it both a personal and a professional mission. "Translation is hellishly difficult," she said, "but it is also a pleasure, and an act of sympathy, and even 'a work of love.' "

The French translator of the fiction of F. Sionil Jose is in the country to immerse herself in the teeming world with which she has somehow found cosmic connection through the agency of the word

Stylistic estrangement

To be sure, the shock of meeting Jose's world is as much stylistic as cultural and geographic. Said took note of the observation of Igor Podberezsky, Jose's Russian translator, about the novelist's language: "His English, like that of many writers from former colonies, must be judged by a special measure. For the person whose native language is English, there is a strange lexicon, strange metaphors and sentence structures. Mainly, for those familiar English words, there are often completely different aims and conceptions which are neither English nor American."

An established poet in France, Amina said she first encountered Jose in a review by the late Jacques Decornoy of "Ermita" in the monthly Le Monde diplomatique, in which the reviewer lamented that while Jose's works had been translated into 23 languages, none of his books had been translated into French. She asked Decornoy for Jose's address and wrote to the novelist. He sent them his novels and, "as you may have guessed, I liked the books I read so much that I decided to translate some of them."

Although not a professional or trained translator (she studied languages and American literature at the Sorbonne), Said plunged with

"TRANSLATION is an act of sympathy," Amina Said says. PHOTOS:PAUL RYAN S. PAGASPAS

enthusiasm to translating the nine stories that Jose collected in "The God Stealer," perhaps his most important collection. "Le Dieu vole" was published in 1996 by Criterion and whetted the appetite of French readers to the fiction of Jose. It was also Said's first brush with the multifarious dilemmas of translating, as she refused to render the title in its complete sense, that is, in the sense of the title's original English, but rather in a sense that the French could understand: "The Stolen God."

She explained: "Some people hold the view that a noun must be translated as a noun, and that an adjective must be translated as an adjective. But I maintain that the title accurately conveys the meaning of the original title. To stick slavishly to the verbatim English to the detriment of the sense of the French translation would be of no service to the French language, to the French reader, or to the author himself. As Kenneth Rexroth reiterated: 'The ideal translator... is not engaged in matching the words of a text with the words of his own language.'

The next year, Criterion published Said's translation of Jose's epic "Viajero." Jose was invited by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Paris and there Said and Ripault met the novelist for the first time. "After that encounter, I told myself the time had come for me to translate the Rosales saga—which I consider to be a masterpiece."

The Rosales saga, of course, is Jose's sprawling five-novel series that focuses on the Philippine experience of the last centuries, from the Spanish period to the coming of the Americans, the painful Japanese occupation, the Hukbalahap unrest, the anxious and lost '60s, and the oppressive years of Marcos.

But before she embarked on the task, Said and Ripault looked for a publisher that would consider the project financially viable. In the end, Fayard, also a top publishing house, agreed to publish all five novels. The first novel in the series, "Po-on," (first in chronology but really the last to be written) was published this month in Paris. Said hopes to finish translating the next volume, "Tree," by September.

Reception

The reception to "Po-on" has been encouraging, aided no less by the great interest of the French in the Philippines as a result of the Abu Sayyaf abductions last year of several tourists, some of them French.

Said, too, is happy because she can finally experience first-hand the world of Jose. She can finally see for herself the rice fields and the big dikes of the north. She and Ripault in fact will be the beneficiaries of Jose's guided tour of the Ilocos, a cultural-historical tour that the novelist has established quite a reputation for among his friends and foreign guests.

The tour at least will afford Said what writer B.S. Medina calls a "cultural immersion" in the world of the author whose works she translates. Medina, one of the country's top writers in Filipino and a translator in his own right, explained during the UST-CCWS forum that translation is at "best intuition guided by the artist's wisdom." Poet-critic Ophelia Alcantara-Dimalanta, the director of UST-CCWS, agreed. "Wisdom is the poet's hand that gives free play to the imagination," she explained.

Not that wisdom and intuition give the translator the license to violate a text. To Said, there will always be "betrayal" in translation (Edward Seidensticker, the German translator of Japanese literature, calls translators "traitors" and "counterfeiters") as long as the translator seeks to bridge the Babel's divide. "Sometimes I think I'm betraying an author, but I have to do it for France," she said, sounding a tad too patriotic and, yes, francophone.

The betrayal extends to correcting mistakes by the author. Said said she sometimes had to point trifling inconsistencies to Jose. "He was even willing to change a whole paragraph in one of his novels when I pointed out something bizarre (in it) to him," she said. She remembered Philippe Bouquet, the translator of Swedish literature, who in the course of translating the stories of Ivar Lo-Johansson, stumbled on a confusing passage. He wrote the author to clear it up. The Swedish writer replied: "I don't understand it either: write what you want."

In a way, Bouquet, according to Said, could be right when he wrote, "A translation is both worse and better than the original. Worse because of the translator's shortcomings, mistakes, inaccuracies; better because the translator is also in a position to correct some of the author's oversights."

But Filipinos may presume the French translation may be better if only because Said is a poet, with a poet's care for words that is both passion and obsession. Said said she has long wanted to write prose, and her translation of Jose's works may be a surrogate act. "Maybe as a poet, I never write novels," she said. "Maybe in translating, it's like writing prose. Maybe I'd like to write novels just as Francisco writes them."

But she also believes that she translates the novels because having been born in Tunisia, the former French African colony, "the problems that (Jose) tackles can be real in Tunisia, too."

In the final analysis, to render Jose's works in French is to reaffirm that the universal cuts across race, gender, geography, and world constructs. Jose is an Ilocano from the Philippines of the Southern Hemisphere who writes in English, a leading tongue of the Northern Hemisphere. His works are translated to French by a woman who was born in Tunisia to a Tunisian father and a French mother and who studied American literature in a French university. Considering the melting pot that is the creative process of writing and translating, the saga of Jose's works from the original English to French, indeed, to some 25 other languages, is not only the adventure of translation, but also the march of humanity and civilization.

French knighthood for F. Sionil Jose

FRENCH Ambassador Gilles Chouraqui will confer on fictionist F. Sionil Jose the Order of Arts and Letters with the rank of Knight tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. at the Ambassador's residence in North Forbes Park, Makati.

Jose is the country's leading fictionist in English whose works have been translated in some 25 languages. The recipient of the 1980 Ramon Magsaysay Award in Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication, he is at present senior associate of the UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies.

Anvil launches book on 7 historical figures

ANVIL Publishing Inc. will launch "Seven in the Eye of History," edited by Asuncion David Maramba, on Jan. 17, 5 p.m., at Villa San Miguel (Archbishop's Residence), Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. The book features the biographies of former President Corazon Aquino, Jaime Cardinal Sin, publisher Eugenia Duran Apostol, Ifugao elder Macli-ing Dulag, peace negotiator Luis G. Jalandoni, activist Eduardo T. Quintero and comfort woman Ma. Rosa Henson, written by the country's foremost writers and journalists.

The biographies were written by Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, Vicente G. Tirol, Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz, Adolfo S. Azcuna, Ma. Ceres P. Doyo, Nestor T. Castro, Sheila S. Coronel, Angelito Lumicao Santos, Fides M. Lim, Bienvenido Lumbera, Lita Pedrosa Hidalgo, Wilfrido V. Villacorta, Dulce Festin Baybay and Ferdinand R.S. Santos.

Maramba, in her Prefatory Essay, describes her choice of the seven as "All of them found themselves in an 'eye of history,' caught within its forces or in its very vortex. Each of their specific historical eye became defining moment, a central factor if not the central factor in their lives, changing their lives or ending them. The moment was crucible, point of no return, last straw. Variously, they responded as victim, as casualty, as protector, as initiator, as catalyst, as builder. And in doing so, they made history."

Maramba is a book editor, columnist, homemaker and a former college professor. The books she has edited are "Philippine Contemporary Literature," "Early Philippine Literature," "The Shakespeare Series," "New Integration, National Communication Arts I," "Ninoy Aquino, The Man, The Legend," "On the Scene, The Philippine Press Coverage of the 1986 Revolution," "Six Modern Filipino Heroes" and "Six Young Filipino Martyrs." She has co-edited "Alay sa Kalinaw: Filipino Leaders for Peace." She is the author of "Companion to Shakespeare," "Outline History of Philippine Literature in English," "Practical Household Management" and "View from the Middle."

The diary of Jesus

COMPILED BY TELLY ALBERT ZULUETA

AN ARTICLE published some time ago tried to debunk the fact that there was such a man as Jesus who had been born in Jerusalem. A book I have just read, "Diary of Jesus," features the historical background of Palestine from 63 B.C. to A.D.70, all four gospels (except for parallel passages) quoted in their chronological order, a large folding map of Palestine and Jerusalem as they were in Jesus' time and a summary of Maria Valtorta's account of Jesus' life.

The author, Jean Aulagnier, a specialist in ancient calendars, took five years to study scientifically the chronology of Maria Valtorta's "The Poem of the Man-God." He came to surprising conclusions in different converging perspectives and has undoubtedly brought new elements in the growing evidence for the authenticity and supernatural origin of this highly realistic "Life of Jesus."

Incidentally, shortly after the 5,500-page compilation of Maria Valtorta's writings in the last 28 years of her life was published in April 1947, Fr. Corrado M. Berti, O.S.M., professor at Marianum Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Rome, and who was responsible in his Order for Maria Valtorta's writings, had the first typewritten copy of it submitted to Pope Pius XII, his Bishop in Rome.

On Feb. 26, 1948, His Holiness received in private audience (reported in the Osservatore Romano Feb. 27) three Servite priests he had convened: Fathers Berti, R. Migliorini, former Pontifical Prefect in Africa, and A. Cecchin, Prior of the Servites International College. Before Fr. Berti and the witnesses Pope Pius XII declared:

" One hears of many visions and revelations. I will not say they are all authentic; but there are some of which it could be said that they are. Publish this work as it is. There is no need to give an opinion about its origin, whether it be extraordinary or not. Who reads it will understand."

When consulted, Eduoard Cardinal Gagnon, head of the Pontifical Council for the Family and Doctor in Canon Law, whose thesis in 1944 was "The Censorship of Books," wrote from the Vatican (Oct. 31, 1987): "This judgement by the Holy Father in 1948 was an official Imprimatur of the type given before witnesses."

Before we start on the Diary of Jesus, let us know more about this Maria Valtorta. She was a very religious girl who became an invalid when a young delinquent, armed with a heavy iron bat, struck her in the back with all his might. Maria survived the assault, for a reason.

As an invalid, she spent the last 28 years of her life, bedridden. Our Lord had chosen her to witness extraordinary visions of His life and that of His Mother's, miraculously transporting her back through time to be actually in the place where the vision was unfolding. Maria wrote what she saw and heard, and sometimes even experienced as well as the explanations given to her by Jesus as to why that particular vision had been chosen and what to emphasize when writing about it.

Sitting up on her bed with a board propped on her knees to serve as a writing table, she wrote on ordinary notebooks for the last 28 years of her life. By the time of her death in 1961, she had accumulated 15,000 hand-written pages. These have been printed in 5,500 pages, divided into seven books in five volumes, and are now entitled "Poem of the Man-God."

"I can affirm," one of Maria Valtorta's declaration reads, "that I have had no human source to be able to know what I write, and what, even while writing, I often do not understand."

Titled initially as "The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ as It was Revealed to Little John," the work evolved into its present title "The Poem of the Man-God."

Nevertheless, it is a "gospel" which neither substitutes nor changes the Gospel but rather narrates, integrates and illuminates it, with the declared purpose of reviving in men's hearts the love for Christ and His Mother.

And it was "revealed" to Maria Valtorta, called "Little John" by Jesus. ("Little," because of the dependence of her work, although quite extensive, on those of the Evangelists who, in short manuscripts, enclosed what is essential; and "John" to place her close to the Evangelist who was the favorite disciple.)

Jesus explains: "The reasons which have induced Me to enlighten and dictate episodes and words of Mine to Little John, in addition to the joy of communicating an exact knowledge of Me to this living victim-soul are manifold, but the moving spirit of all of them is My love for the Church, both teaching and militant, and My desire to help souls in their ascent toward perfection. The knowledge of Me helps to ascend for My word is life.

- The most profound reason for the gift of this work is that in the present time (this was between 1910 and 1961) when modernism, condemned by My Holy Vicar Pius X, becomes corrupted in more and more harmful doctrines, the Church may have further material to fight against those who deny the supernaturalness of dogmas;
- To arouse a keen love of the Gospel and for everything pertaining to the Christ—renewed love for My mother, in whose prayers lie the secret of the salvation of the world. Mary has given the Savior to the world. The world will receive salvation again through her.
- To give spiritual masters and directors assistance in their ministry by studying the different souls of the world in which I lived and the different methods used by Me to save them. Many souls have accepted the Christian idea, but not Christian citizenship, as they belong to separated churches.
- To clarify certain points that a number of circumstances have covered with darkness and thus form dark zones in the brightness of the evangelic picture."

Note: To order the five books serialized in Glow Magazine some years ago, by permission of Centro Editoriale Valtortiano, write to National Center of the Legion of Little Souls, Royal Pines, Tagaytay City or call 809-2409/5546 or (046).

Singaporean poets go on Manila reading tour

FOUR poets from Singapore will conduct a reading tour of three Metro Manila Universities on Jan. 17-19.

The visiting poets are Felix Cheong, Heng Slok Tian, Aaron Lee and Alvin Pang, all of whom have published poetry collections and whose works have been widely anthologized.

Arranged by the Philippine Literary Arts Council (PLAC), the readings will start at 10 a.m. on Jan. 17 at the University of Santo Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies headed by Dr. Ophelia A. Dimalanta.

The visiting poets will engage in a joint reading with poets-alumni of UST, including Dimalanta, Cirilo F. Bautista, J. Neil Garcia, Ramil Digal Gulle, Lourd de Veyra, Alma Anonas, Nerissa Guevarra and Carlomar Daoana. A discussion and open forum will follow, with literature students making up the audience.

On Jan. 18, Ateneo de Manila University's English, Filipino and Interdisciplinary Studies departments, along with the Heights literary journal, will host the Singaporean delegation in a similar program starting at 4 p.m.

Ateneo poets expected to join the reading and discussion include Rofel Brion, Salvador Bernal, Benilda Santos, Danny Reyes, Connie Jan Maraan, Jonathan Chua, Gad Lim and Mookie Katigbak.

On Jan. 19, it will be the University of the Philippines' Creative Writing Center headed by Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo and the English Department chaired by Jose Y. Dalisay Jr. who will host the Singaporean delegation at Casa Verde in the Diliman campus, starting at 4 p.m.

The reading tour will be capped by a joint reading with PLAC members and friends at 9 p.m. on Jan. 19 at Sanctum, the new haven for the Spoken Word poetry readings run by Triccia David and Aslie Aslanian.

Sanctum is located at Chamber 9, Puerta Isabela II, Muralla St., Intramuros (in front of Letran gym/dorm, beside Pancake House) with tel. 523-5407.

PLAC poets expected to join the reading include RayVi Sunico, Marne Kilates, Ruel de Vera, Juaniyo Arcellana, Felix Fojas, Jimmy Abad, Risky de Ungria and Krip Yuson.

Poetry lovers are enjoined to attend the event, which will presage an Open Mic reading.

Ayala Museum holds fiction-writing workshop

A FOUR-SESSION workshop on writing a short story will be held at the Ayala Museum starting Jan. 27. The workshop will be held every Saturday, 9 a.m.-12 nn, and will be facilitated by UP Creative Writing Center director Prof. Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo.

Hidalgo has published more than 15 books of fiction and nonfiction, among them the Palanca prizewinning novel "Recuerdo" and winners of the Manila Critics' Circle's National Book Award, "Catch a Falling Star," "Tales for a Rainy Night" and "Coming Home." She teaches creative writing and literature at the UP and directs the highly competitive UP National Writers' Workshops.

The modules are designed for students, professionals, housewives and all who wish to improve their writing but have no time to enroll in formal university courses. Participants will meet for three hours for four consecutive Saturdays and produce manuscripts that will be submitted to the facilitators for comments. Groups will be kept small for the benefit of the participants.

These writing workshops are organized annually as part of the Ayala Museum's continuing education program, by Escuela sa Museo and Learning for Empowerment and Development Inc., a group of workshop facilitators who are writers connected with UP's Creative Writing Center.

Other writing workshops are: Creative Non-Fiction, Creative Writing for Children, Introduction to Creative Writing and Poetry Writing.

Call Ethel Villafranca at 812-1191 to 97 local 130, or visit the Ayala Museum, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Use Your Chopsticks

The next time you have an oriental meal, try using chopsticks. Chopsticks don't just make your meals fun. They are actually more convenient to use for certain foods if you know how to use them properly. And there's nothing like eating authentic Soy Chicken, like the one served at Chowking, with a pair of smooth bamboo chopsticks. Imagine picking up those tender slices of chicken cooked in oriental herbs and spices, glazed with a soy sauce, then dipping this in minced ginger and sesame oil, and finally popping this all in your mouth! Read on and soon, you'll be using chopsticks like a pro!

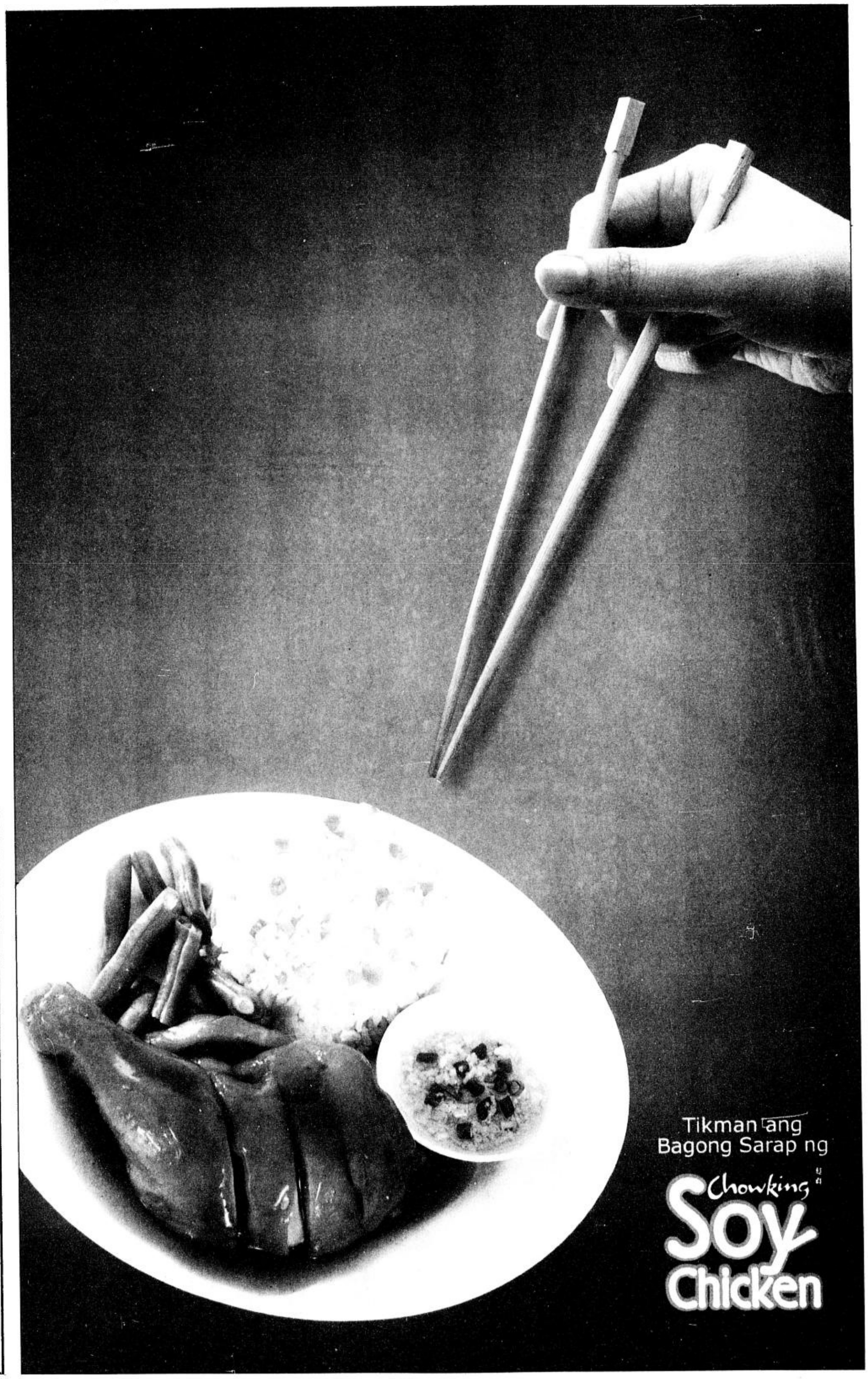
There are actually several types of chopsticks. Japanese chopsticks are pointed, while Chinese chopsticks have blunt ends. Typically, Chinese chopsticks are the longest and made of bamboo. Korean chopsticks are medium in size and made of a silver material. There are chopsticks used specifically for cooking and some for eating. Each person has their own set of chopsticks that are kept in a box.

How to Use Chopsticks

- First, rest the upper half of one stick between your thumb and forefinger on your right hand (or left, if you're left-handed).
- Hold the lower half of the stick firmly against your ring finger.
- Hold the second chopstick as you would hold a pencil.
- To work the chopsticks, keep the first stick stationary.
- Move the second stick up and down to pick up your food.
- This takes practice, but once you get the hang of it, you won't be able to stop.

Here are some do's and don'ts when using chopsticks:

- Chopsticks should never be stuck in or used as spears for food. Don't stick them in the center of your bowl or dish because this means bad luck to some people.
- Do not pass food from your chopsticks to someone else's.
- Don't use your chopsticks at a pointer or wave them around to express yourself.
- Next time you go out for chinese at Chowking, try using a pair. Happy chopsticking!



Wanted: Uncommon Valentine stories

DO you and your partner have an **unusual** love story? If you do, write us about it. Tell us in 1,000 words or less what makes it unusual. Webster defines "unusual" as "not common, not ordinary or exceptional." To that we have to add two more conditions: your love story should be true and you and your partner must still be together. Include with the story your full name, address, telephone number and—if available—mobile phone number and e-mail address.

E-mail your entries to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph or send them to "Love Stories" c/o Lifestyle, PDI, P.O. Box 2353, Makati Central Office, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague Street, Makati City. **Sorry, no faxed entries will be accepted.** Entries should be received at the INQUIRER offices **no later than Jan. 31.**

The five most extraordinary love stories sent in by readers as adjudged by the Lifestyle staff will be featured in our Valentines issue. Each winning pair will also get a restaurant certificate for dinner for two.

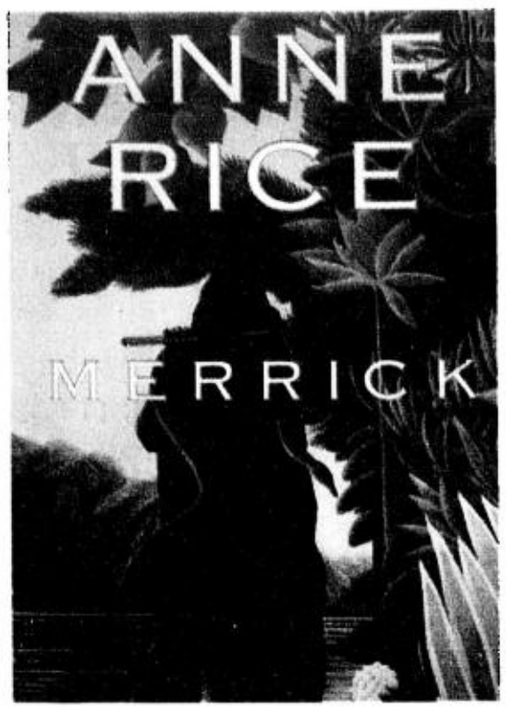
Bad blood for Anne Rice's 'Merrick'

Merrick
By Anne Rice
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2000
307 pages

BY RUEL S. DE VERA

Anne Rice's newest vampire novel enters the undead mythology anemic and lacking teeth

REVIEW



AFTER THE OTHERWORLDLY success of her vampire novels, Anne Rice's distinctively ornate paragraphs, bleeding with adjectives and adverbs, sometimes seem like curios in an antique-shop window: Pretty and fascinating, but also impractical and intimidating. All those qualities are all very much in evidence in Rice's newest novel, "Merrick," a dark, tangled forest of a book inhabited by vampires, witches and body thieves, oh my!

The brooding creatures of all of Rice's different fictional worlds practically hold a convention in "Merrick," Rice's 17th novel. Set in modern-day New Orleans, most of it deep in the evening, "Merrick" boasts of three worthy, if blood-sucking, guests-of-honor: undead Talamasca scribe David Talbot, handsome undying nobleman Louis de Pointe du Lac and rock-star monster Lestat. The three popular vampires are living in relative obscurity in the velvety city when a shade from their collective past returns to haunt them—the ghost of the tragic girl-vampire Claudia, destroyed by sunlight in the groundbreaking "Interview with a Vampire."

Anguished and confused, Louis, with the aid of David, recruits the aid of a most extraordinary character: Merrick Mayfair, irresistible witch and a valuable part of the Talamasca, the covert order of watchers David used to be part of before his transformation. Only Merrick, says narrator David, can conjure the spirit of the dead—even Claudia. The deliciously dangerous and intelligent Merrick seems to have more in mind than simply helping the grieving Louis. That ulterior motive, shrouded in seduction and secret, may just put all of them in peril.

Unsettling scenes

Some things, like a vampire's complexion and dental records, never change and the prolific Rice can still produce some unsettling scenes. In fact, there are more notably creepy scenes in this book than in her last outing, "Vittorio, The Vampire." The voodoo rituals, ancient beings and ghostly visitations found in "Merrick" are not only effective, but also quite refreshing since readers have seen the protagonists in New Orleans before. So with the old secrets in the background, the merits of "Merrick" rely most heavily on, well, Merrick herself.

Merrick, of course, is the latest link in Rice's Mayfair witches series. In Rice's typically over-the-top prose, Merrick is clearly meant to be a child of sorcery and sadness, and for those same reasons, frightening and alluring. "Merrick was by this time a famous beauty, and the young members were always falling in love with her and complaining bitterly that she repelled their advances and even their praise. Merrick never spoke of love, or of men interested in her. And I had come to suspect that she was enough of a mind reader to feel very much isolated and alienated, even within our hallowed halls," David recalls of the time Merrick rose to the ranks of Talamasca. Rice makes it clear that readers have no choice but to be entranced by Merrick. Yet, despite the lengthy foray into her past, there seems to be precious little to her save for the magic and the desire.

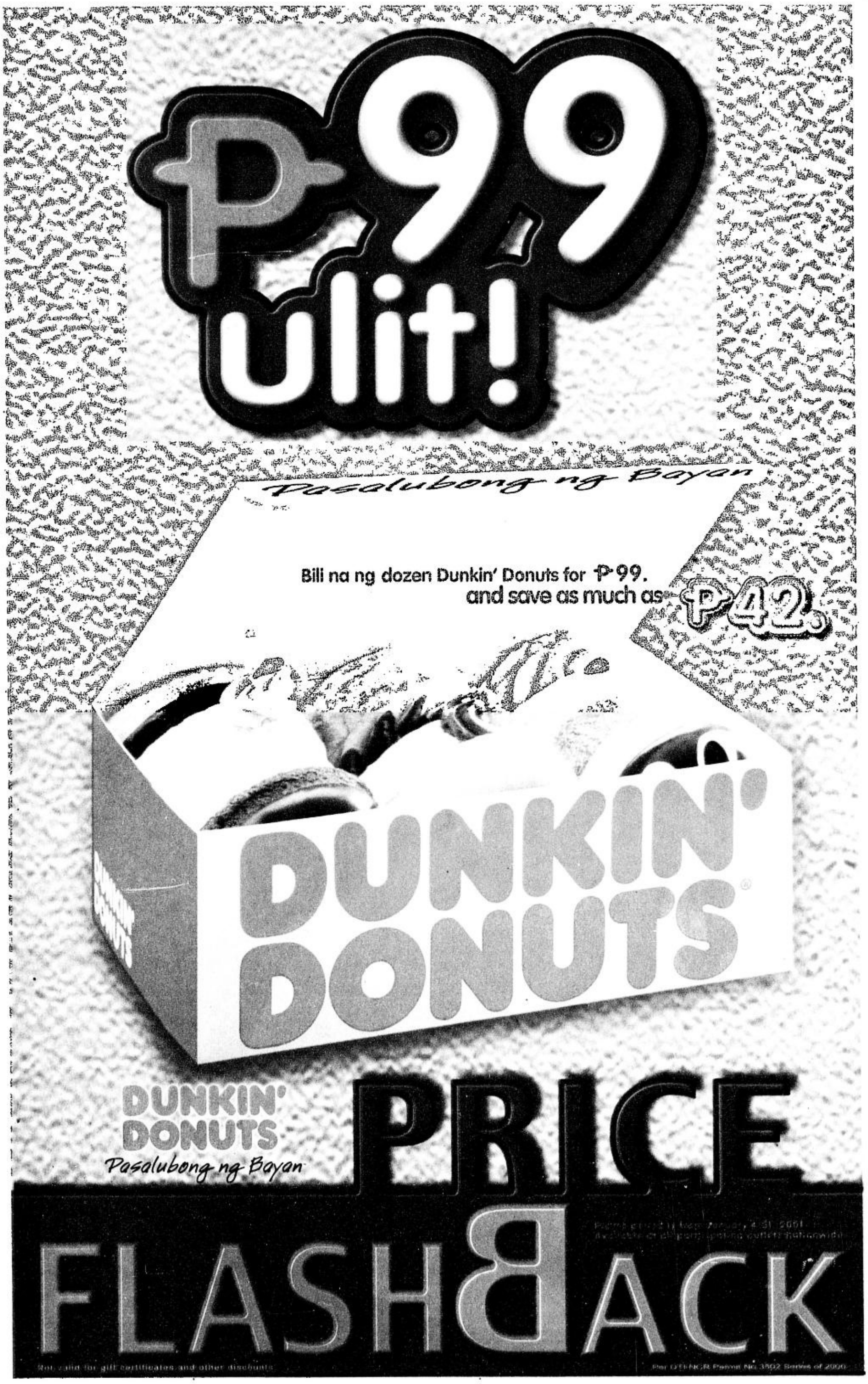
Eloquent

As with the previous novels, David Talbot makes for an overly eloquent narrator, effective but distracting due to the burdensome brooding and overheated scenes Rice has given him to deliver. "We vampires," he says to Merrick, "we love beauty, we feed on it. Our definition of beauty expands enormously, you can't quite imagine how much. I don't care how loving your soul, you can't know how much we find beautiful that mortals don't find beautiful, but we do propagate by beauty, and this body has beauty which I've used to evil advantage countless times." Make no mistake, while Louis and Lestat do play major roles in "Merrick," the book's tension and its pulse is derived from the murky past shared by David and Merrick. The book is, in effect, a very long and drawn-out letter written in David's bloody penmanship.

While Rice has always had a taste for dizzying, twisting plots, "Merrick" is shackled by the awkward division of the book between current events and flashbacks. Even as the reader, already hampered by the dense prose, attempts to make heads or tails of the happenings, Rice then drives a stake through "Merrick's" heart by attaching a predictable and rather weak ending on the book. It is a bit surprising that Rice, known for her virtuosity and fearless plotting, can write a book that feels this uninspired. It often feels like the entirety of "Merrick" is merely a transition to the next real vampire book.

Readers will get the feeling that the vampire in "Merrick" may have been roused from the grave just a tad premature. Though Rice does throw in a few new elements into the familiar fray of mortality, love, beauty and blood, too much of "Merrick" feels either as old territory or as being too convenient. Still capable of a few scares, Anne Rice's "Merrick" greets the creatures of the night just a bit too lazily, leaving her endlessly hungry readers searching for a meatier read to sink their teeth into.

Available in hardcover at National Bookstore and PowerBooks



Book on development

ENVIRONMENTALIST Nicanor Perlas of Center for Alternative Development Initiative releases a timely book that deals with new capacities on how the Philippines will emerge in the current crisis, titled "Shaping Globalization: Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding."

The book is especially relevant for Filipinos struggling for the emergence of a civil society where our leaders adhere to basic values and principles of social renewal. In the Preface to the Philippine edition, Perlas says: "The Philippines has entered into a critical juncture in its history. Millions of Filipinos from all walks of life have gone to the streets, seeking the removal of the President of the Philippines, and clamoring for a systematic overhaul of Philippine society including its political system. How the Philippines will emerge from this crisis, now and the first decade of the 21st century, is intimately connected with coming to grips with the book's central themes. In this way, the book can be a companion in the struggle to create a new Philippines."

INFOTECH

LEO MAGNO, Editor

THE RIGHT TO DIGITAL COPYRIGHT

IT body forms subcommittee on digital copyright

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

THE INFORMATION Technology and E-commerce Council (ITECC) Legal Cluster has created a subcommittee that will oversee issues related to intellectual property (IP) on the Internet. The ITECC is the country's highest IT policymaking body.

The Intellectual Property Rights subcommittee is presently composed of members from Cyberpress—the Philippine association of information technology journalists—representatives from the Quisumbing Torres law firm and representatives from the private industry such as Web publishers.

Considering that the existing E-commerce Law lacks provisions that protect IP rights on the Internet, the subcommittee aims to come up with recommendations that would be transformed into a guideline, which the Intellectual Property Office can adopt.

The subcommittee was created Jan. 8 and had its first formal meeting on Jan. 12 to discuss issues on copyright infringement on the Internet, and other intellectual property rights-related matters. The ITECC Secretariat, which is currently headed by Trade Assistant Secretary Toby Monsod, is scheduled to invite the local IP office to attend the subcommittee's meetings.

Composed of volunteers from the private sector and representatives from government agencies, the ITECC's Legal Cluster is currently tasked to come up with legal policies that will support the E-commerce Law. It has been divided into subcommittees, namely "e-retention/e-invoicing/e-OR," trade, security and intellectual property rights.

The group indicated that the results of discussions among subcommittees would be presented to (ITECC) on March this year.

The Legal Cluster has also decided today to create a new subcommittee on consumer protection. The subcommittee will likely produce legal guidelines that would attempt to marry the Consumer Act of the Philippines and the E-commerce Law. Dennis Deveza of DFNN.com will head the group.

Currently, the existing E-commerce Law lacks provision that protects intellectual property, specifically digital copyright.

According to discussions today, the IP office—a government agency mandated to oversee and protect intellectual property rights—takes four to six months to deliberate IP violations that occur on the Internet.

"Usually, you need a temporary restraining order (TRO) to stop a certain party from copying content on the Internet," remarked one of the members of the Legal Cluster. In the United States, Internet service providers immediately shut down content providers found guilty of "filching" or copying content even without court orders. In the Philippines, a court order is still required to ask service providers to stop someone from filching digital content.

IT/ p.G3

Websites in the Philippines are filching content left and right. If no one complains, no one will stop doing it.

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Existing RP laws enough to protect copyright on the Internet, says IPO

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

EXISTING Philippine laws are enough to protect intellectual property rights (IPR) on the Internet, according to the head of the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) Intellectual Property Office (IPO).

"We (already) have a law that protects IPR on the Internet," Director General Emma Francisco said.

The Philippines has yet to sign the World Intellectual Property Organization (Wipo) Internet treaties, which needs at least 30 member-countries concurring before it takes effect. At least 21 countries have signed the Geneva agreement as of December 2000.

Francisco noted that even the "technologically advanced" countries are still debating about signing the treaty. The United States and Japan, however, have already signed the Wipo copyright treaty. The Intellectual Property (IP) Code of the Philippines was passed in 1997.

"Why should we go ahead of the pack?" Francisco said during the meeting of the Information Technology and E-commerce Council Legal Cluster Subcommittee on IPR on Friday.

However, the Philippines has yet to test its own IP laws. So far, there has been no known case related to IPR violations in cyberspace, which would test the merits of existing laws.

Francisco noted that it is the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) that has the responsibility to submit the treaty to the Office of the President for approval. The IPO as a resource agency can only make recommendations to the DFA, she said.

A legislative act is likewise needed before the Philippines can sign the Wipo Internet treaties.

Francisco also noted that several bills related to IPR are now pending in Congress. These proposed laws, she said, are likely be taken up by year-end or after the Senate impeachment trial.

The signing of the treaty has been included in the IPO's legislative agenda for 2001, she said.

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Broadband firm opens US R&D training facility

ABEST, a Taiwan-based supplier of multiservice broadband access equipment has recently opened a $2-million research and development training facility in a 3,500-square foot building in the Peoples Professional Park in Thomasville, North Carolina. This facility houses state-of-the-art computer systems and automated software design tools.

ABEST established the facility in partnership with Duke University, gathering a team of software development experts to handle year-long training of a total of 15 software engineers, 13 of whom are Filipinos.

The opening of the training center marks another milestone in ABEST's commitment to long-term excellence in product design and service. Aside from training software engineers, the facility may be expanded in the future to include a customer training center.

Dr. Larry Burton, ABEST president, led the members of the Board of Directors in the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the ABEST Training Facility, ushering in a new era of telecommunications and a more prominent global presence for the company.

B2B e-commerce in Asia faces greater challenges, opportunities than others

A LACK of payment and logistics infrastructure create formidable challenges for companies seeking to establish online B2B (business-to-business) marketplaces in Asia. However, these same challenges mean that successful B2B marketplaces, once established, could prove more valuable to buyers and sellers—and to owners—than similar marketplaces in the United States and Europe. These were the top-line conclusions of a recent roundtable discussion sponsored by the Click2Net forum.

Click2Net is a bi-monthly gathering organized by McKinsey & Company, Rosanna L. Go and IBM. Its mission is to provide a forum for B2B players to gain insights from their peers, discuss recent market trends and interact and network with each other. In the recent discussion forum, four start-up online firms with a presence in the Asia-Pacific region shared their confidence in, and their concerns about, their recent leap into the B2B fray.

Management consulting firm McKinsey and Company has observed that B2B e-commerce in the Philippines, and in Asia generally, will develop differently than in the United States and Europe. For example, the limited e-payment and logistics infrastructure in Asia mean that marketplace operators may need to provide financial settlement and fulfillment services, rather than serving simply as "deal brokers," the traditional role of online marketplaces.

CATERINGX is one of the country's first B2B exchanges

Several members of the discussion forum confirmed this observation. According to Danny Pido of CateringX, a B2B online marketplace for the catering industry: "I think the companies are looking for much more than what (most marketplaces) offer right now. To grow the B2B marketplace, we need to offer the value-added services, for example e-payments."

Another challenge is the low level of IT readiness of many Philippine companies. To participate in an online marketplace, companies must have IT systems powerful and sophisticated enough to exchange data with the marketplace in real-time.

"It's a huge challenge when you look at what each company needs to do inside their enterprise to be successful and to reengineer themselves to work with these exchanges in the future," says Jay Ennesser of IBM's E2Open, which provides software and solutions that power online marketplaces.

These challenges, serious as they may seem for fledgling online companies, failed to dampen the forum participants' enthusiasm for their businesses. The secret to success, virtually all participants agreed, is flexibility and a willingness to constantly reassess and adapt the company's business offering.

"I'm (constantly) trying to figure out what the value proposition is going to be next week. Because whatever it was today, it's going to change in 10 days," explains Ennesser.

In light of the insights shared during the forum, Click2Net is inviting interested sponsors and speakers for the next forum—tentatively scheduled for February 2001. Interested parties may contact Rosanna Go at rosanna.go@click2net.org.

McKinsey & Co. is an international management-consulting firm that serves leading corporations and organizations in most industrialized nations and many emerging markets. With nearly 6,000 consultants deployed at 81 offices in 43 countries, McKinsey advises companies on strategic, operational, organizational and technological issues.

Hewlett-Packard cofounder dies at 87

HEWLETT

SAN FRANCISCO—Hewlett-Packard Co. cofounder William Hewlett, who helped launch a technology revolution out of a Silicon Valley garage, died on Friday morning in his sleep, the company said.

Hewlett, 87, and David Packard, who died in 1996, founded their company in 1939. One of their first sales of electronic equipment was to Walt Disney Studios, which used it to perfect the soundtrack of the animated movie "Fantasia."

The pioneers built a company known for technological innovations, such as the first pocket calculator, and became examples for their dedication to employees and philanthropy.

Begun in a one-car garage with $538, Hewlett-Packard is now a computer and printer powerhouse with nearly $50 billion in annual sales. It also spun off Agilent Technologies Inc., an $11-billion testing equipment firm.

The company started in the shadow of the Great Depression, leading the young businessmen, Hewlett and Packard, to be careful with their money but generous with their employees, embracing a management style that has become known as the "HP Way."

"When I was born, there was no money, so we said: 'We don't want to borrow money.' People who'd borrowed money had gotten into trouble," Hewlett said in a 1997 interview on the website of The Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose, where he was a major donor.

"We also said: 'We don't want to hire and fire in our company' and things like that. It really reflected our background of what it was like to be in a bad economy."

Apple Computer was inspired by HP in part, said founder Steve Jobs, who got a summer job at Hewlett-Packard after calling Bill Hewlett at home.

"What I learned that summer at Bill and Dave's company was the blueprint we used for Apple," Jobs said in a statement. "Today marks the passing of their era, but their spirit lives on in every company in this valley."

Hewlett gave up his active role in running the company in 1978, when he retired from the post of CEO, and was named board director emeritus in 1987.

Peter B. Giles, President of the Tech Museum, said in an interview that Hewlett was forever curious and had as a philanthropist supported conflict resolution, education and the arts.

"There have been a lot of people giving money and investing in community that are doing it because of Bill's example," he said.

Hewlett also was known for his sense of humor. In college, he said, he packed a doorknob with explosives and blew it up as a prank. "Of course, I didn't get caught," he said.

Hewlett and Packard met at Stanford University, based in Palo Alto, California, in the heart of what has since become known as Silicon Valley.

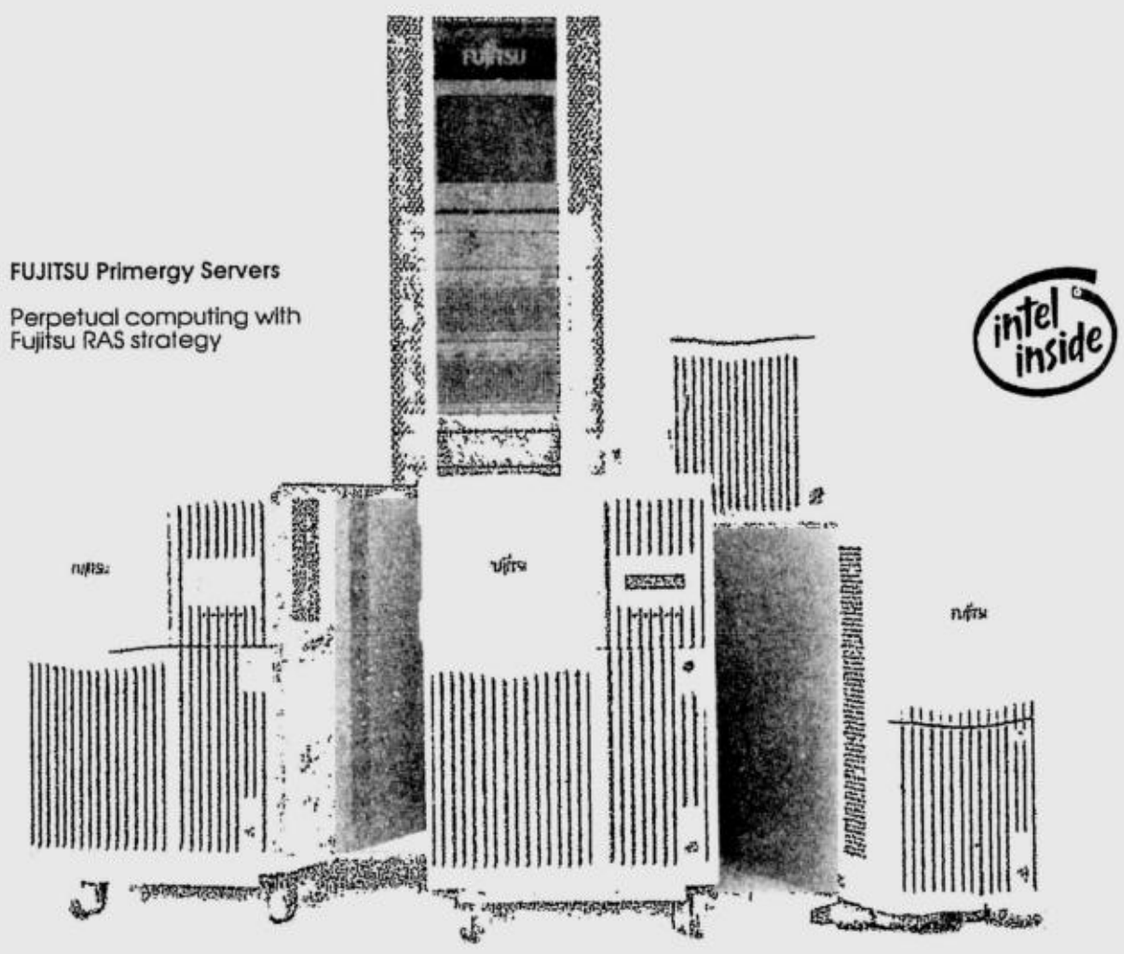
Encouraged by a professor at the university, which has produced scores of technology entrepreneurs since, the two decided to start a business selling practical applications in the nascent field of electronics from Packard's garage, which has been designated a California state historical landmark.

William Redington Hewlett was born May 20, 1913 in Ann Arbor, Michigan and at age three moved to California, where his father, a physician, joined the faculty of Stanford Medical School.

Hewlett and Packard donated more than $300 million to Stanford over the years.

Hewlett is survived by his second wife, Rosemary, five children and five stepchildren.

Reuters



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E-filing of taxes limited to large firms, says BIR

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue (BIR) is expected to roll out its P5-million online filing system on March 26. But the electronic filing system will be limited to 730 "large" taxpayers and 2,000 employees of the agency.

This was according to Albert Pio de Roda, BIR assistant commissioner and head of the Information Systems Group, following a meeting on Tuesday at the agency's main office in Quezon City.

The bureau divides taxpayers into three categories. These are individuals paying taxes through their compensation, individuals paying taxes through their businesses, and corporations remitting taxes to the agency. Large taxpayers would include companies like San Miguel Corp., the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Shoemart.

The "pilot" system will be evaluated for at least three months, Pio de Roda indicated. The BIR expects to fully implement the e-filing system for the 11 million Filipino taxpayers within the year if the pilot system will present no problems.

Pio de Roda pointed out, however, that the e-filing system would likely benefit large companies and a select group of individual taxpayers. For the rest of the 11 million Filipinos, he said that the agency is contemplating to have a call center accept phone-based filing and payment of taxes.

Incidentally, the National Statistics Office currently provides a single number Filipinos can call if they want to get copies of birth, marriage and death certificates. The same number also gives out relevant statistical information about the Philippines.

Pio de Roda disclosed that Fujitsu Philippines won the bid to implement the agency's so-called e-filing system. The BIR is currently working on "specific requirements" for the system, which will be submitted to Fujitsu in the next few weeks. The bureau's budget for the e-filing system was P13 million, and Fujitsu won with a bid of P5 million.

"Fujitsu will provide the applications for the e-filing and payment system and the server (computer) to host the applications for the pilot project," Pio de Roda told the INQUIRER.

Under the e-filing system, large taxpayers will be required to enroll with the BIR. The agency, in turn, will provide these taxpayers with usernames and passwords, which they will use to enter the e-filing system through the agency's existing website at www.bir.gov.ph.

"Part of the contract with Fujitsu also includes evaluation of the BIR's Internet facilities. In fact, we expect Fujitsu to send consultants to evaluate our Internet facilities," Pio de Roda said.

The e-filing system will use Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology using 128-bit encryption, according to Pio de Roda. This encryption technology would address potential security threats to the online system.

WHAT IS?

SSL—Secure Sockets Layer is a protocol for managing the security of the transmission of a message. SSL uses a program layer located between the Internet's Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and Transport Control Protocol (TCP) layers. As a standard, SSL is included as part of both Internet Explorer and Navigator and most Web servers. SSL was developed by Netscape and is now supported by Microsoft and other Internet client/server developers as well. The "sockets" part of the term refers to the sockets method of passing data back and forth between a client and a server program in a network or between program layers in the same computer. SSL uses the public-and-private key encryption system from RSA.

iAyala launches business incubator in Luzon, Cebu

AYALA Internet Venture Partners, the investment arm of iAyala, recently helped pave the way for the establishment of the Philippines as an IT capital with the launching of IdeaFarm. IdeaFarm is a business incubator with close ties with the academe. In Luzon, it is based at the University of the Philippines' Technology Business Incubator Building at Diliman, Quezon City. In the Visayas, it is based at the Cebu Civic and Trade Center in Cebu City.

Arcy Canumay, director of IdeaFarm, related that a key driver in the growth of Silicon Valley and other global IT centers has been the availability of venture capital as well as business consultation through incubation.

"Our partners in Silicon Valley have emphasized the need for young talents to have free access to funding as well as mentoring in running a business if our industry is to develop fully," he said. "This is the crucial task IdeaFarm is trying to fulfill."

Canumay also clarified that other key factors in the growth of any IT industry include tie-ups between the academe and the private sector and the granting of government incentives to IT businesses.

"The synergy developed from industry-academe tie-ups as well as government support in terms of incentives have also proven to be key ingredients to success," he said.

Canumay emphasized that IdeaFarm is setting its sights on start-ups focused on knowledge-based services, applications and enabling technologies for the Internet. Its objective will be to get these start-ups "on their feet and to support them."

"But we are about building businesses and not just IPOs," Canumay stressed. He related that IdeaFarm is ready to provide professional mentoring in the following areas: administrative and accounting systems, legal and financial spheres, market and business strategy planning and investment matching.

In Luzon, IdeaFarm is based at the University of the Philippines' Technology Business Incubator building along Katipunan. The facility has computers, servers, a high-speed network and high-speed Internet access available to its clients or "incubatees."

Rafael Rodriguez, UP vice president for development, observed that IdeaFarm's office location is ideal because it fosters closer ties between business and the academe. "In the US, the universities are directly in contact with business firms. The scientists and laboratories are in the university but the money to commercialize technological innovation is in business." He noted that the close links between Stanford University and Silicon Valley advanced information and communication technology in leaps and bounds.

Canumay said: "We intend to create a community of people adept at technology as well as the demands of the marketplace. We foresee that this community will be a pillar of the IT industry in the Philippines."

IT body forms subcommittee . . .

(From page G1)

"We still have to deal with the legal system in the Philippines if the violator happens to be in the country or has hosted its content locally," said Claro Parlade of PAB Law firm. What if the content is hosted in the United States? That's another issue.

Incidentally, the Philippines has yet to sign the World Intellectual Property Organization (Wipo) treaty which, among others, protects piracy on the Internet. The treaty was signed Dec. 23, 1996 in Geneva.

"I think the IP Office is not about to sign the Wipo treaty because it believes the IP Code already provides the guidelines for Internet piracy," continued Parlade. "People do copyright violations on the Internet because it is really hard to police the Internet."

Under the intellectual property rights subcommittee, issues on domain disputes could also be discussed.

This, however, is where the subcommittee on digital intellectual property rights enters the picture. Granted that the government is stating that existing laws can take care of digital copyrights on the Internet. But what precisely is being protected? With endless innovations on the Net, it is hard to wield an old law which does not adopt to the changing times.

Precisely what is protected? Is framing not allowed? How many characters are allowed per story everytime content is used by other websites with a link back to the original source? What about images found in the website? Logos? Spoof websites?

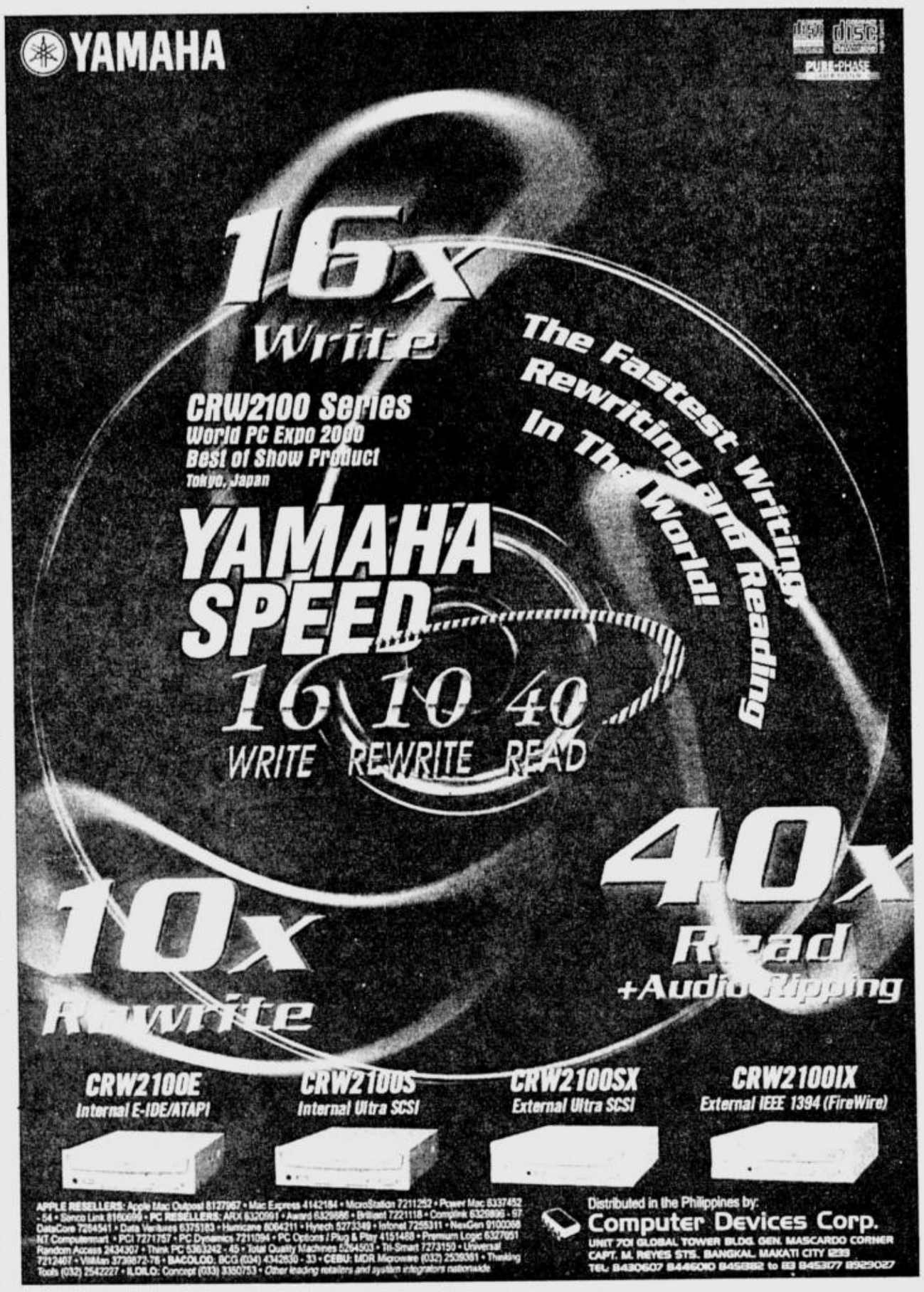
These are questions not answerable by the IP code—no wonder no known case of intellectual property infringement on the Internet has been brought forth, because existing laws do not specifically state which acts of copying on the Web are legal and illegal.

AOL-Time a done deal

NEW YORK—Executives from the newly combined AOL Time Warner Inc. rang Friday's opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange.

But champagne-popping aside, there's no escaping the fact that the merger that closed on Jan. 11, 2001, faces a much different world than when it was announced on Jan. 10, 2000.

As executives waited for federal approval, a stock slump shrank the value of the deal from $165 billion to $106 billion. Slower ad growth threatens several core businesses. Expectations have been scaled back for how quickly new services such as interactive TV will be introduced. Nonetheless, industry experts remain convinced that the driving premise behind the merger—combining the Internet with traditional media—is still a sound business idea. *AP*



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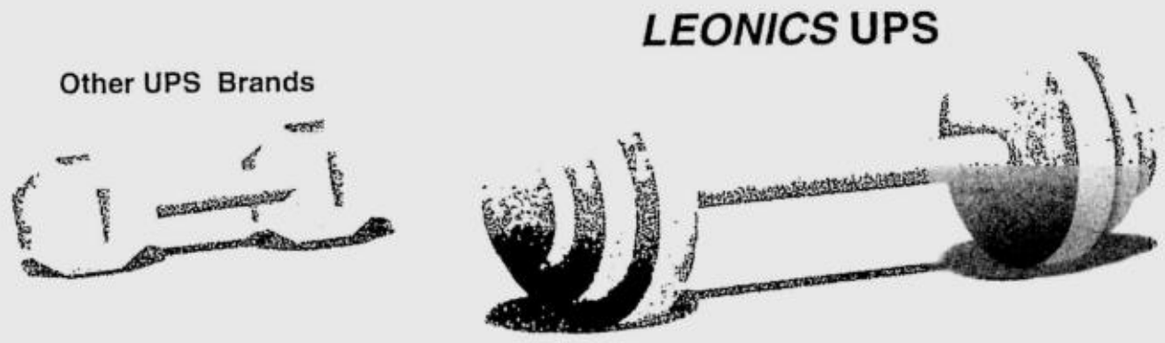

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'It was out of fun,' says guy who 'framed' Inquirer.net

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

IT was all out of fun, so he says. However, no one seems to be laughing.

Last week, Inquirer.net was victim to a nasty joke. Typing the URL (Uniform Resource Locator) http://www.philippinedailyinquirer.com led people to the online edition of the Manila Bulletin. The INQUIRER and Manila Bulletin are two of the biggest newspapers in the Philippines.

The INQUIRER eventually learned that the person behind this prank was named Aldwyn Villaseñor, an employee of Getronics, a multinational firm based in the United States. Villaseñor used his office account to pull the prank, prompting Getronics to reply via a statement sent to the INQUIRER.

"His original intention was fun. He was totally unaware of the consequences and the distress he caused on both publications," Catherine Chan, head of corporate communications and human resources of Getronics Philippines, told the INQUIRER in the statement.

As result of his "irresponsible and disrespectful" actions, the company has asked Villaseñor to go on leave as a form of disciplinary action, Chan indicated.

"We regret that this happened. We don't condone this kind of act from our employees," Chan added.

She, however, admitted that the company was surprised with Villaseñor's involvement in the incident. Ironically, the twenty-something Villaseñor is considered one of the "better employees" who joined the information technology firm in 1998.

"The news came unexpectedly considering his background," remarked Chan. Out of curiosity, she asked if Inquirer.net was taking legal action against Villaseñor or Getronics.

Villaseñor owns the www.philippinedailyinquirer.com domain name. Surprisingly, the INQUIRER also found that he is the owner of another domain name, www.bading.com, which, as of this writing, has "framed" US-based website www.advocate.com.

Framing literally means putting several websites in separate frames or "windows" within a website. Thus it is possible that Villaseñor could have "framed" several websites at www.philippinedailyinquirer.com. However, he opted to create just a single frame and placed Manila Bulletin's website in it. Therefore, if you key in www.philippinedailyinquirer.com, you would end up seeing the other paper's online edition.

It is just like looking through a window, when suddenly someone decides to replace it with another view.

Framing a website is deemed an unethical practice which goes unpunished, particularly in the Philippines. This, in fact, is close to violating a digital copyright.

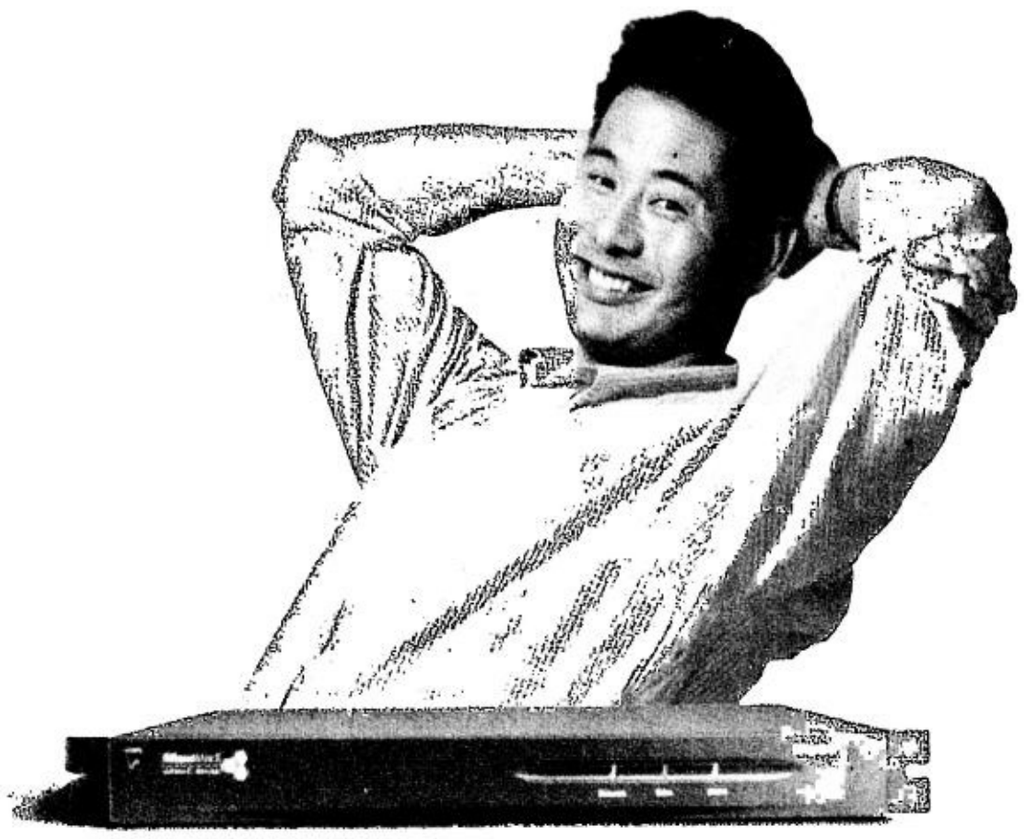
WATCH out for websites which will stab you in the back by stealing your content.

Villaseñor decided to undo his joke last Monday after Inquirer.net broke the story.

Framing is now generally frowned upon by professional websites. The Inquirer.net, for example, is often framed by many websites. This allows the website's visitors to go to the Inquirer.net, surf through the content of the site and go through all of the Inquirer.net's sections without ever leaving the website of the "framer." That's instant content for free for all you lazy framers out there.

Unfortunately, a law protecting digital copyright in the country is not yet in existence. But this does not mean we can just copy everything we see on the Web. Some websites like Inquirer.net have set policies and guidelines which seek to deter people from indiscriminately copying or "filching" digital information from the site. However, without clearly defined laws, people continue to copy content on the Web left and right.

The Information Technology and E-commerce Council (ITECC) subcommittee on intellectual property rights is scheduled to discuss such digital copyright issues on Friday, Jan. 12 in an attempt to set guidelines. The ITECC is the country's highest IT policy-making body



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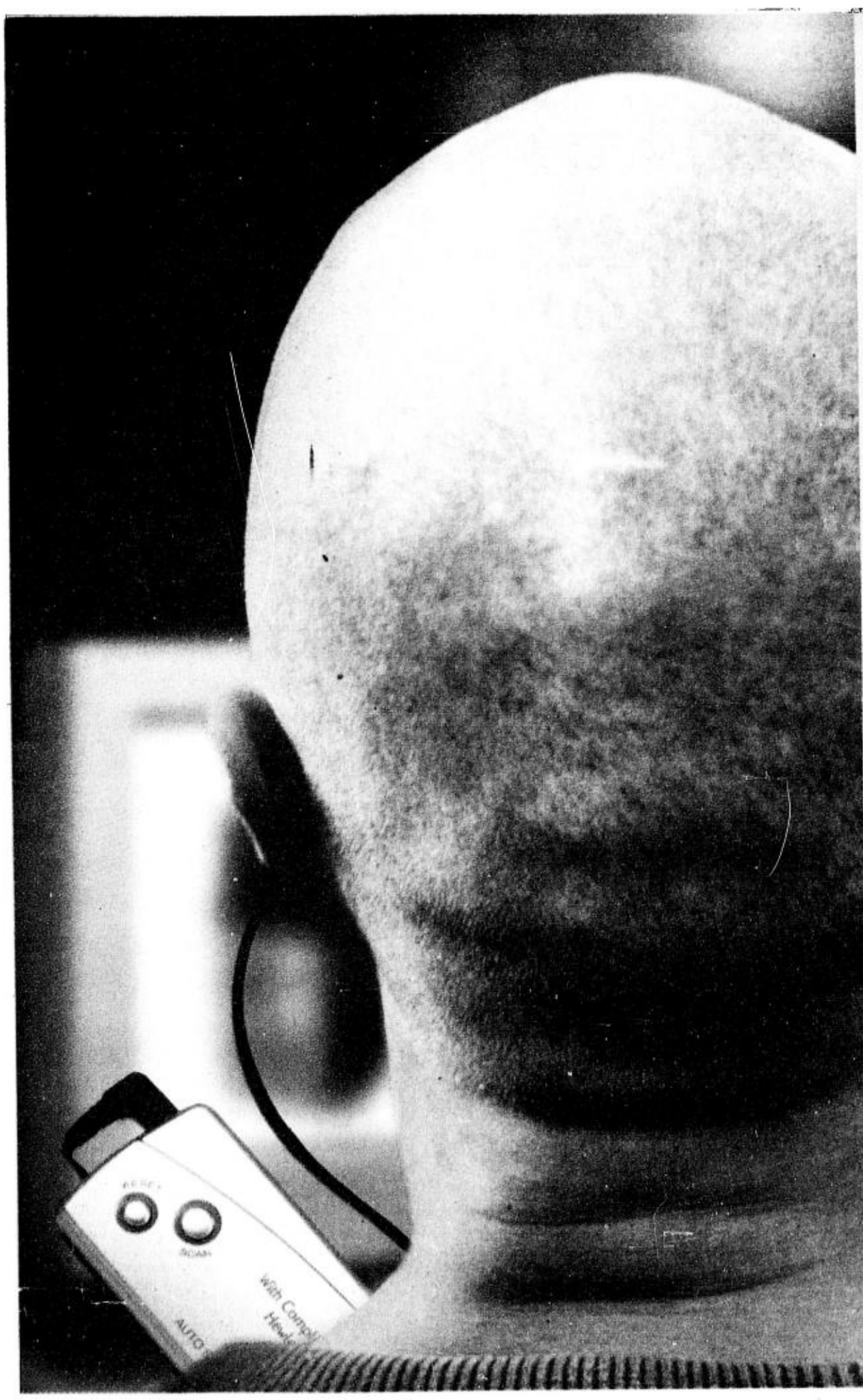

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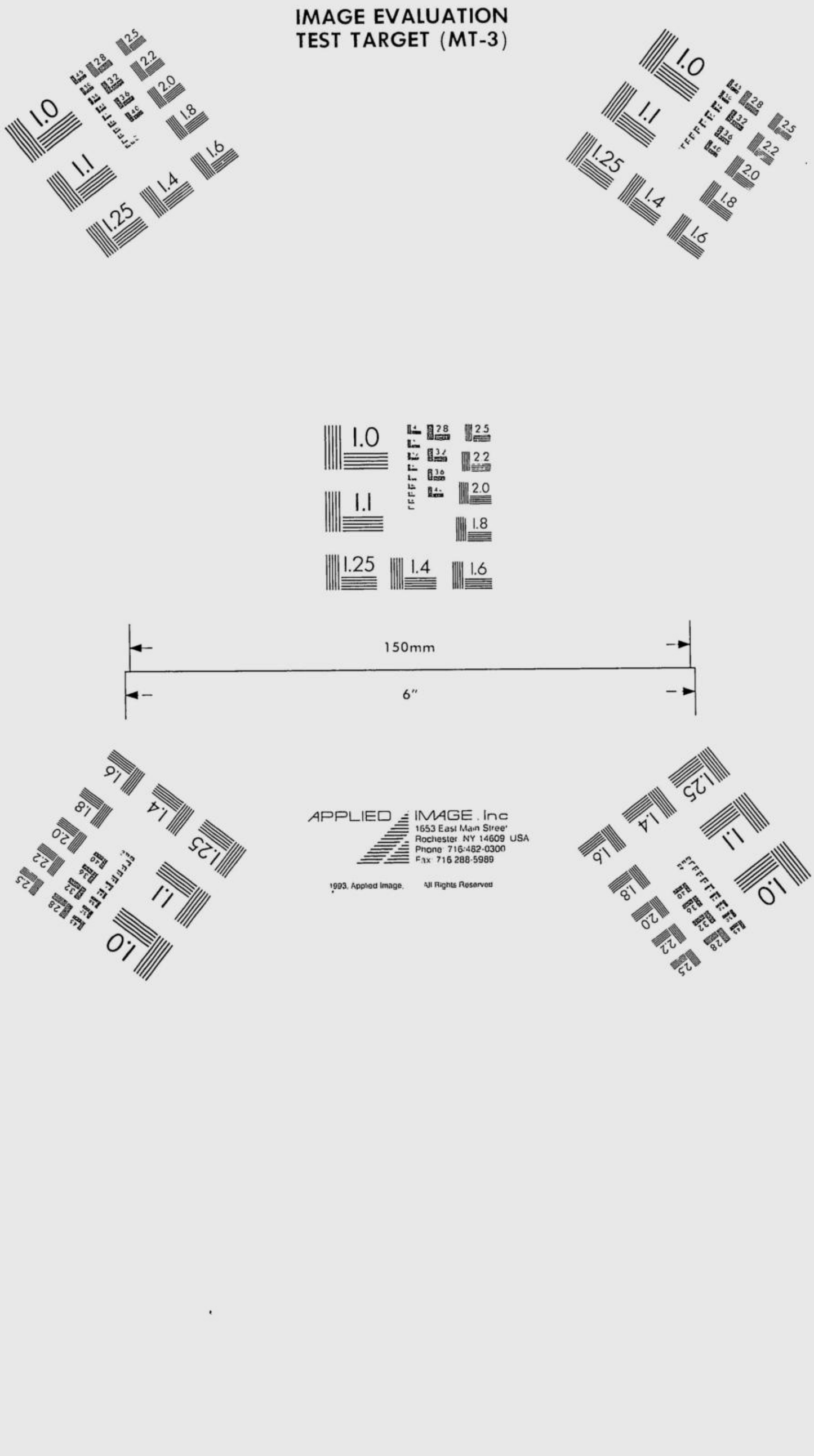
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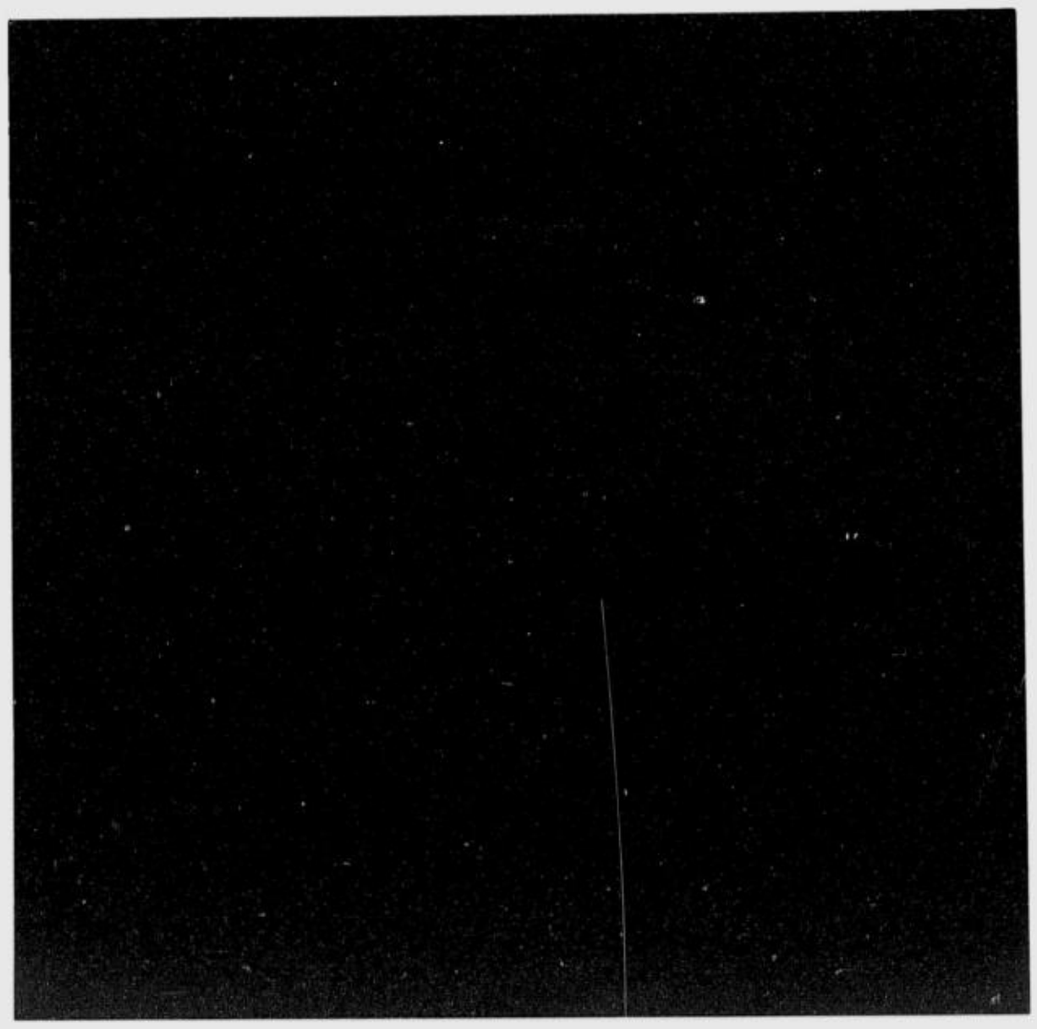

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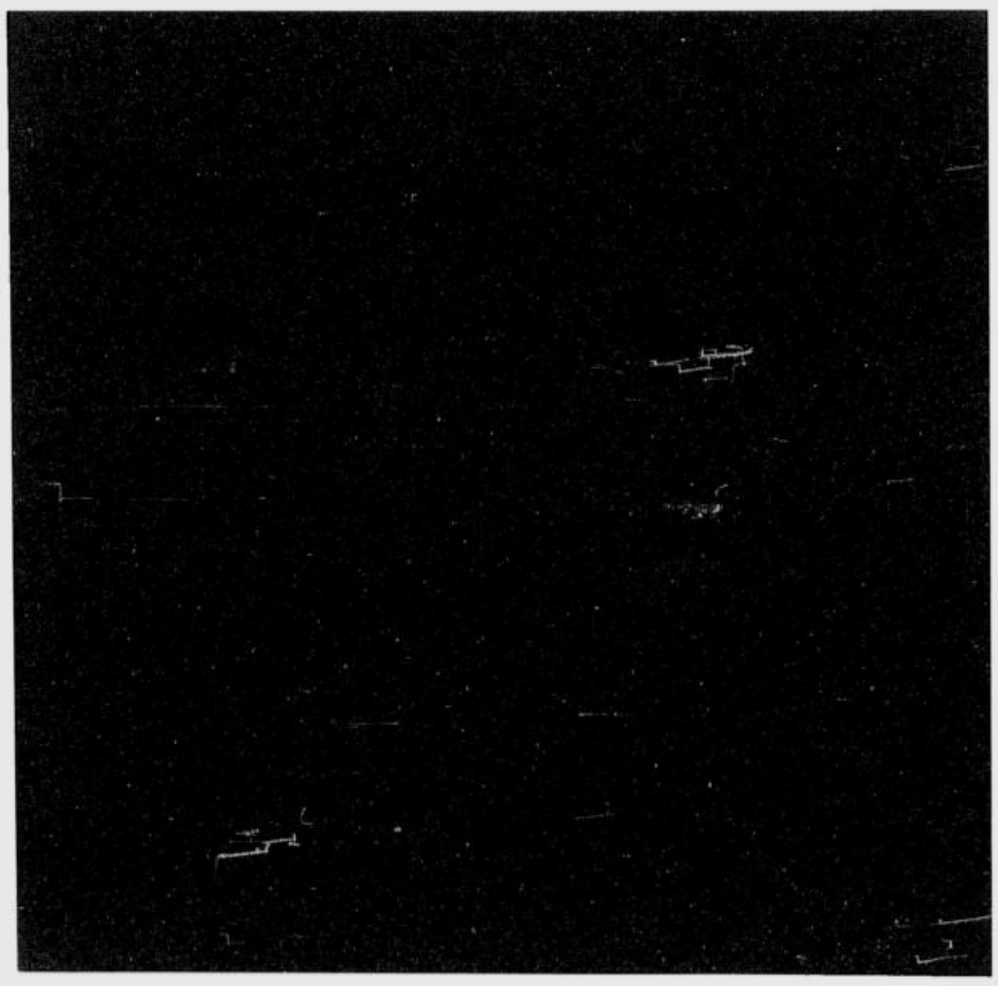

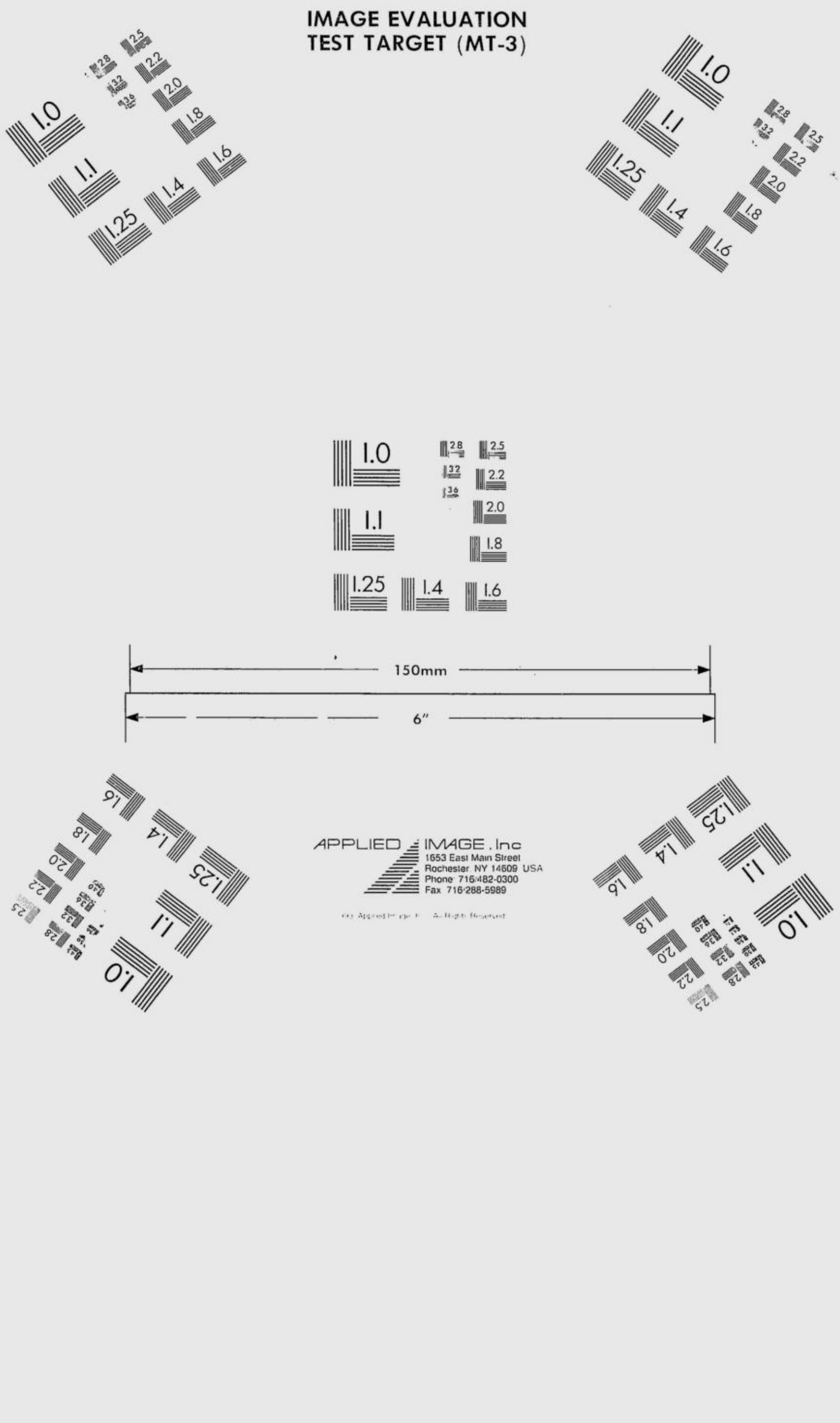
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